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JOSEPH JOHN RICHARDSON.

ANNEX





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JOSEPH JOHN RICHARDSON.

ANNEX





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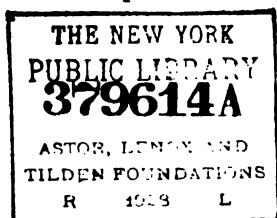
A
R E V I E W
OF THE
PRINCIPLES
OF
NECESSARY AND CONTINGENT
TRUTH,
IN REFERENCE CHIEFLY TO THE
DOCTRINES
OF
HUME AND REID.

Lvall
Etenim duo esse hæc maxima in philosophiâ, judicium veri et finem
onorum ; nec sapientem posse esse qui aut cognoscendi initium ignoret,
ut extremum expetendi, ut, aut unde proficiscatur, aut quo pervenien-
tum sit, nesciat.

CICERO *Acad. Quest. Lib. IV Cap. 20.*

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MDCCCXXX.



Pars ista humanæ philosophiæ, quæ ad Logicam spectat, ingeniorum plurimum gustui ac palato minus grata est; et nihil aliud videtur quam spinosæ subtilitatis laqueus ac tendicula. Nam sicut verè dicitur scientiam esse animi pabulum; ita in hoc pabulo appetendo et diligendo plerique palatum nacti sunt Israelitarum simile in deserto; quos cupido incepit redeundi ad ollas carniû; manna autem fastidium cepit: quæ licet cibus fuerit cælestis, minus tamen sentiebatur almus et sapidus. Eodem modo (ut plurimum) illæ scientiæ placent, quæ habent infusionem nonnullam carniû magis esculentam: quales sunt historia civilis, mores, prudentia politica, circa quas hominum cupiditates, laudes, fortunæ vertuntur et occupatæ sunt. At istud lumen siccum plurimorum mollia et madida ingenia offendit et torret. Cæterum unamquamque rem propriè si placet dignitate metiri, rationales scientiæ reliquarum omnino claves sunt—atque quemadmodum manus instrumentum instrumentorum, anima forma formarum, ita et illæ artes artium ponendæ sunt; neque solum dirigunt sed et roborant, sicut sagittandi usus et habitus, non tantum facit ut melius quis collimet, sed ut arcum tendat fortio-rem.

Bacon. De Augm. Scient. Lib. V. Cap. 1.

JOSEPH W. B.
JUNIOR
VIRGIL



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE disquisition and criticism contained in the following pages were intended to form part of a larger and more regular treatise on the subjects to which they refer. The completion of this, however, is very uncertain, and at any rate will be distant ; and in the meanwhile, it has been thought that the separation of this particular portion, as being in a great degree controversial, from the rest, would be not merely practicable but advantageous. This is mentioned only in explanation of that deficiency of plan, and, in one or two parts, of connexion, which may probably strike the reader, in the present volume ; and to account for the allusions which will occasionally occur in it, to views and doctrines which are

otherwise but imperfectly unfolded ; circumstances which, however they may affect the interest of the work as a whole, will not, it is believed, be found to interfere either with the clearness or completeness of the particular discussions of which it is made up.

May, 1830.

A

R E V I E W

OF THE

PRINCIPLES OF TRUTH.

I.

§ 1. ALL that we know of mind is, that it feels, thinks, reasons, knows, wills: all that we know of body is, that it is extended, figured, solid, divisible, moveable. What either is in itself, beyond these powers of the one, or qualities of the other, we know nothing.

It is plain, too, that our knowledge of the existence of mind is previous to any which we can have of body; knowledge being eminently the act of mind, which is therefore pre-supposed in the first perception of body itself.

We cannot doubt of the existence of mind, for the very act of doubting implies the operation of that existence which is stated as the subject of the doubt. The bare proposition, therefore, of such a scepticism is unintelligible. Neither, I

believe, can we actually doubt of the existence of body; but the only ground of this impossibility is to be found in the necessary entity which we know to belong to every object of the mind's perception. And the proposition here is, at any rate, intelligible in the abstract.

§ 2. The materialist hypothesis is therefore, on the face of it, absurd; and Locke's remark, that we shall never be able to know whether infinite power might not have given to matter a power of thinking, was merely saying, that we cannot know whether God might not have given to material substances all the properties of spiritual ones; or to inanimate all the properties of animate. Omnipotence may change matter into mind, or mind into matter; but it cannot be conceived to give to matter the properties of mind, without making it cease to be matter; that is, without making it cease to be what we understand by matter: which notion unless we adhere to, this and every other proposition concerning it becomes unintelligible.

§ 3. Might not God, it will be said, *super-add* to matter the properties of mind, without disturbing the existence of the former? If by this

it be meant to ask, whether He might not so combine the two substances, as to form by their union, a new one distinct from either? certainly, not only He *may*, but in the instance of man we know he has done this. In any other sense I do not see the possibility of this superaddition. We know things only by those qualities which distinguish them in our perceptions. These qualities consequently become essential, if not to their being in the abstract, at least to our idea of their being; their separation, therefore, is inconceivable without destroying that which, to our understandings, constitutes the very essence of the things themselves.

It will be objected that this is assuming the point, that that which thinks in us is not material. But, in fact, we assume nothing, as we can know nothing, of the *principle*, whether of mind or of matter. It may be the same in both; though this, as some one has observed, concludes no more as to the possible materiality of mind, than as to the possible spirituality of matter. Our conceptions both of mind and of matter, are the most distinct and opposite possible; and to affirm of the one that it may be the same thing with the other, seems equivalent to the proposition, that heat may be cold, or light darkness; and like

these, if not positively contradictory, is no otherwise not so, than because our ignorance of the particular ground and cause of all existences is such as to remove the proposition itself beyond the jurisdiction of human reason.

§ 4. Mallebranche, though he holds with Descartes, that our knowledge of the existence of mind is more certain than that we have of matter, yet he conceives it to be at the same time less distinct and clear*. "Our knowledge of the properties of matter," he says, "is as clear and complete as it can be conceived to be. We know what extension is, and from our idea of it can argue as to all the infinitude of its possible relations; but of sensation and thoughts we have but an obscure confused notion from experience; nor do we know what it is in the soul which makes it capable of them."

I do not believe this to be any otherwise true, than inasmuch as some of the particular properties of matter may be apprehended by the imagination, while the powers of mind never can be so. But this does not affect the question of our know-

* *Recherche de la Vérité*, Book III. ch. vii. Of the quotation which follows I have mislaid the reference. I rather think it occurs in one of his answers to Arnauld.

ledge of either: for Descartes had profoundly observed, that our perception, even of body, is not an act of the senses or of the imagination, but an *inspection of mind* *; and considered in this point of view, it will be found, that our idea of thought or sensation is no more confused or obscure than is that which we have of extension; and assuredly, in either case, we are equally ignorant of what it is, which makes their respective substances capable of these powers or qualities.

It is plain, in short, that all we know of bodies is by the ideas we form of them in our minds. Abstracting the consciousness of the operation whereby she produces those ideas, the mind certainly knows little or nothing of herself; but, on the other hand, abstracting those ideas themselves, she knows, if it were possible, still less of the body which forms the subject of them. In both cases, it should seem, that our knowledge is as perfect as it is conceivable it should be.

§ 5. That we cannot argue from our knowledge of the powers of mind, as to their abstract relations, as we can in the case of the properties of matter, is an objection grounded upon a for-

* Meditation II. Sect. 13.

getfulness of the distinctly different nature of the two things. The *kinds* or *quantities* of power or faculty can be estimated only by their *effects*. Perhaps, therefore, the very science which has so perfected our knowledge of the relations of extension and figure, may be considered as in an equal degree elucidating the nature of the faculties of mind itself, as exercised about them.

For the rest it appears doubtful, whether the idea of *relation* be properly applicable to mind, in the same sense, at least, as it is to matter. Mind is that which perceives relation; relation is inconceivable otherwise than as perceived by mind; it should seem, therefore, that considered generally, mind itself is not properly comprehensible under that point of view.

I am inclined to suspect too, that something of a similar misapprehension of the essential difference of the two natures in question, is involved in the attempt of some later philosophers to apply to the science of mind the same principles of inductive inquiry, which have produced results so astonishing in its application to physical research. There is, indeed, the authority of the great author of that *Organ* for its equal applicability to both departments of knowledge. But his opinions or rather his decisions (for they commonly assume to

be no less) have the less weight on this subject, as it is one to which he had evidently given little attention; and indeed, the science itself, if it even yet deserved the name, could hardly be said to exist in his time. It had, in effect, perished in the victory which the peripatetick had so early obtained over the Platonic philosophy; and its revival in modern times dates only from Descartes.

§ 6. That philosopher is admitted to have been the first, since the restoration of learning, at least, who clearly perceived the truth, and the importance of the doctrine here propounded, of the essential difference of mind and matter, as two distinct and independent natures, possessing no single power, quality, or attribute in common. And in this observation it has justly been said, that he laid the only real foundation for the fabrick of metaphysical science. Indeed, until a man has thoroughly informed his mind as to the necessity of this distinction, I do not conceive that he is qualified even to apprehend the proper object and scope of that department of research, much less to prosecute it to any valuable or successful result.

§ 7. And this would seem to constitute the chief merit of Descartes' philosophy. The road

he took was the right one ; but he does not appear to have made any material progress in it. In fact, the principle upon which he commenced his inquiries into the grounds of human knowledge, itself precluded all satisfactory conclusion on the subject. For admitting that all our perceptions, whether of sense or knowledge, are equally liable to doubt, he implicitly precluded any possibility of re-assurance as to the subjects of them.

§ 8. Thus in his third Meditation, he suggests as a pressing difficulty, that God or some superior being may have so constituted him that he should be deceived as to the things which seem most evident. This he admits as possible ; and he next proceeds to examine whether or not there be a God ; and, if so, whether he can be a being that deceives. But it was easily objected to him, that as he can pursue the inquiry only by the employment of those very faculties, the accuracy of which is the point in question, he had thus, in the very statement of his problem, involved himself in a circle, which at once forbad any prospect of solution *.

* This error was early objected to Descartes by his opponents, particularly Arnauld ; and he endeavoured to obviate it by a distinction between the things we actually perceive

§ 9. His methods, too, of proving, the existence of the Deity, seem at first sight to be any thing but conclusive. Of these he gives several; the most celebrated of them, and that on which he seems himself disposed to lay the chief stress, is the

clearly, and those which we only recollect to have so perceived. In the first instance, he says, we know that God exists, because we give our attention to the reasons which prove to us his existence. But, after that, it is enough that we remember to have conceived a thing clearly to be assured that it is true; which would not be the case if we did not know that God exists, and that he cannot deceive. *Réponses aux quatriemes objections.*

It should seem from this, that the assurance which we derive from our knowledge of the existence of God, refers not to our actual reasonings, but to the accuracy of our recollection of those which we remember to have made formerly. While considering any proposition of Euclid, I may be certain of the conclusion, (though even this is doubtful, since in the very act of deduction I depend upon my memory, both of other propositions and of the earlier steps of this,) but afterwards I can only retain that certainty from the consideration that God would not suffer me to be deceived in my reasonings respecting it. But it will be answered, that I may have the evidence of memory only for the conclusion itself of the existence of God. Moreover, in the instances alleged in the first Meditation, (viz. that $2+2=4$; that a square has four sides, &c.) it is plain that we do not at all depend upon our memory of former reasonings for our knowledge of our conclusion.

proof of God's being, derived from our very idea of Him, as including necessary existence in it. In other things, he observes, however distinct be our ideas of them, the mind sees nothing that assures her of their existence; whereas in the idea of a God, she perceives not merely, as in all others, a *possible*, but an absolutely necessary and eternal existence. As in our idea of a triangle we necessarily include that of the equality of its three angles to two right angles; so in conceiving of God, we cannot conceive of him as otherwise than as necessarily and eternally existing; and therefore he is *. "Not," says Descartes, "that my so thinking makes it so to be, or that it imposes any necessity on things; but, on the contrary, the necessity there is in the thing itself determines me to have this thought; for it is not in my power to conceive a God without existence; that is an all-perfect being without a given perfection; as I can imagine a horse with wings or without wings †."

§ 10. That there is a real force and weight in this reasoning, I am disposed to believe, though at first impression, as Descartes himself admits,

* Principes de la Philosophie, Partie I. Sect. 14.

† Meditation V. Sect. 8.

it has all the air of a sophism. The obvious objection to it, is that which is stated by Dr. Cudworth*, that upon a necessity of existence affirmed hypothetically, the conclusion concerning it is made absolutely. All that we can strictly infer from it is, that if there were any such perfect Being, then was his existence always necessary, and always will be such; but it does not follow that there must of necessity be such a perfect being existing.

§ 11. Notwithstanding this difficulty, however, Dr. Cudworth is equally with myself inclined to find weight in the argument; and he has suggested reasons for its cogency more refined and ingenious than any which seem to have occurred to Descartes. Thus he admits, that it may be argued that the idea of God, including in it not an impossible, nor a contingent, but a necessary relation to existence, it follows from thence absolutely that he does exist. For as of things contradictory, or having in them an impossible relation to existence, we conclude that they never were nor will be; and of things not impossible, but imperfect only, and having therefore a con-

* Intellectual System, Book I. Chap. V.

tingent relation to existence, we can pronounce that possibly they might be, or might not be ; in like manner of a perfect being, including in it the idea of a necessary relation to existence, we may, by parity of reason, conclude concerning it, that it is neither impossible nor yet contingent to be or not to be, but that it certainly is and cannot but be.

This is ingenious, but I suspect it proves too much. For would it not follow that we cannot argue hypothetically at all concerning the existence of God, as a perfect being, since the very supposition of such a being implies his existence ? The preferable conclusion, perhaps, from so strange a result, would be that the supposition itself was impossible ; that is, that we could not form the idea of a necessary existence at all.

Cudworth himself does not appear very well satisfied with this argument, and accordingly he produces another, which he propounds after this manner. " If," says he, " it does not follow from the idea of a perfect being, including necessity of existence in it, that such an one does actually exist, it must at least be allowed, from its implying no manner of contradiction in it, that it is therefore a thing possible, or not impossible, to be. But if God, in whose essence is contained neces-

sary existence, be possible to be, then He is ; because upon supposition of his non-existence, it would be absolutely impossible that He should ever have been. Wherefore God is either impossible to have been, or else He is ; for if God were possible, and yet be not, then is He not a necessary but a contingent being, which is contrary to the hypothesis."

But are we not here again confounding an hypothetical with an actual necessity ? " If God were possible but be not, then is He not a necessary but a contingent being." But the question is not what He is, but what He would be on a particular supposition, which unless we are at liberty to make, the argument itself cannot have place at all. If the non-existence of the Deity be not conceivable, of course there is no room for dispute. If it be conceivable, then is the hypothesis admissible, that a self-existing being, though possible, may not be. Besides, that the same argument seems conversely applicable on the part of the adversary, who might in like manner contend, that since there is nothing absolutely inconceivable in the non-existence of a perfect and necessarily existing being, it is impossible there should be any such ; since if there were any such his non-existence would be inconceivable.

In this instance also, however, Cudworth seems to distrust the refinement of his reasoning, and accordingly professes to lay no great stress on its conclusiveness. He adduces, therefore, another argument as "more plain and downright," though I suspect it is open to a similar objection. "Whatsoever," says he, "we can frame an idea of in our minds implying no manner of contradiction, this either actually is, or else if it be not, it is possible for it to be. But if God be not, He is not possible hereafter to be ; otherwise He would not be an eternal and necessarily existing being, therefore He is."

If there be any fallacy (which I am not sure) in this reasoning, it seems to lie in the use of the word *hereafter*. The possibility assumed in the hypothesis is not that God not being now, may be, or may have been, at some other time, which would be clearly contradictory to our notions of Him as a self-existing being ; but that his being or his not being at all at this moment is in itself equally conceivable. True it is that if He be not now He never can have been, and never will be ; but this is in no degree inconsistent with the alternative supposition that He actually is.

Our author, however, without expressing any mistrust of the solidity of this argument, subjoins

what he calls "a yet plainer demonstration of a God from the idea of Him including necessary existence in it;" and which is, in substance, that as something has always existed, and as every thing could not be made, something un-made is, which must have existed of itself from all eternity. But nothing could so exist but that which contains necessary and eternal existence in its own nature; that is, only an absolutely perfect being; all other imperfect things being in their own nature contingently possible to be or not to be.

I admit the force of the argument, but it seems to prove the existence of the Deity, not *implicitly* upon the Cartesian principle, from our *idea* of Him as containing necessary existence in it, but *directly*, by shewing that something must exist necessarily, and inferring that that Being is God.

§ 12. Cudworth, however, justly rejects the notion of Descartes, that without a previous demonstration of the being of a God essentially wise and good, there is no possible certainty to be had of any thing; nor ground of assurance that we ourselves might not possibly be so made by chance or fate or the pleasure of some evil dæmon, as that we should be deceived in all our most clear and evident perceptions. He points out the obvious

δι' ἀλλήλων of this reasoning, which attempts to prove the truth of God's existence from our faculties of reason, and again to prove the truth of those faculties from the existence of a God essentially good ; and he adds, that the hypothesis itself is impossible, inasmuch as even omnipotence could not make any thing to be indifferently either true or false, or so constitute our human faculties as that we should have as clear conceptions of falsehood as of truth, " Truth," he observes, " is not factitious, it is a thing which cannot be arbitrarily made, but *is*. The divine omnipotence has no power over the divine understanding ; for if God understood by will only He could not understand at all. The truth of singular contingent propositions must depend upon the things themselves existing without, as the measure or archetype thereof ; but respecting the universal and abstract theorems of science, the terms whereof are those reasons of things which exist no where but in the mind itself, whose *noemata* and ideas they are ; the measure or rule of truth for them cannot be any thing without the mind, but contained within it, and therefore can be nothing but its clear and distinct perception. Every clear and distinct perception is an entity or truth, as that which is repugnant to conception is a non-entity, or false-

hood ; nay, the very essence of truth is this clear conceptibility or intelligibility ; and therefore can there not be very clear or distinct perception of falsehood, which must be acknowledged by all who though granting false opinions, yet admit that there can be no false knowledge. He adds, " In false opinions the perception of the understanding power is not false, but only obscure. It is not the understanding power or nature in us that erreth, but it is we ourselves who err, when we rashly and unwarily assent to things not clearly perceived by it *."

§ 13. This is a passage of profound sense ; but the doctrine it contains is still open to cavil on some points ; as the whole subject, I apprehend will continue to be, until we attain to a somewhat clearer understanding of the real nature of the act of mind involved in the formation of our ideas. Among those difficulties, however, I do not reckon the objection of Descartes, that it is possible our faculties may have been so framed as to lead us to wrong conclusions. This Cudworth has considered at some length towards the conclusion of his posthumous Treatise on Immut-

* Intellectual System, Book I. Chap. V.

able Morality; but his reasoning on the subject is any thing but satisfactory, and perhaps it may be considered as some imputation on his judgment, that he attempted at all to argue directly with a difficulty, the very statement of which removes it beyond the jurisdiction of reason. It is plain that, whatever criterion be assigned for the adjudication of the question, must itself be liable to be disqualified by a similar challenge; nor can any created intelligence, however high or approximating to perfection, be at all more secure from the intrusion of this kind of scepticism than ourselves. The doubt, we may add, may be *stated*, but cannot be *entertained*. No one can conceive it possible that his faculties should actually deceive him in the perception of abstract truth; for our whole idea of truth being derived from the sense of authority which we feel to belong to the conclusions of those faculties, to suppose that which we thus know to be true, to be not true, involves a confusion of notions and a contradiction of terms, which one would wish the sceptic no worse punishment than the task to unravel and reconcile.

§ 14. A more plausible objection is, that if truth, as Descartes and Cudworth tell us, be an

entity existing merely in the perceiving or conceiving mind, it would at first sight appear that an obscure conception or perception is as much an entity as a clear one, for it is equally an act or modification of the mind. But, in fact, our perceptions, however clear or distinct, are not themselves so properly entities, as they are the proofs or criterion of the entity of the thing perceived. We perceive a thing or a relation *to be*; our perception here does not cause or constitute its being; but it necessarily implies or supposes it; and the proposition which, upon that perception, affirms the existence of that which is the object of it, is properly that which we call *true*. Truth, then, belongs to *propositions*; and the criterion of it is, that we clearly perceive the existence which it affirms, and cannot conceive it to be otherwise. To ask further what is the criterion of that clearness of perception, is in reality to ask we know not what; as much as if we required another light to enable us to see that of day. Any other or higher degree of assurance than that which is thus afforded us is actually inconceivable.

§ 15. Hence it is that Mr. Hobbes has, with his usual sagacity and precision, defined *truth*

to consist in the *right ordering of names in our affirmations*; for, as he says, "True and false are attributes of *speech*, not of *things*; and where speech is not, there is neither truth nor falsehood. *Error* there may be; as when we expect that which shall not be, or suspect what has not been; but in neither case can a man be charged with untruth *." I do not know whether the philosopher of Malmesbury was the first to suggest this limitation of the term Truth; but it is equally profound and important.

§ 16. In assigning this definition of Truth, however, Mr. Hobbes should, perhaps, have more explicitly prevented the objection which it is obvious to make, that as nothing can be more arbitrary than the imposition of names, such a doctrine would seem to throw a degree of uncertainty upon the whole fabrick of human knowledge. But, in fact, however arbitrary be the *imposition* of names, their *significancy* is nothing less than so; a word that recalls no meaning is not a *name* at all, but a mere sound. If *understood*, it necessarily supposes some existence, ideal or real, of which it is the sign; although, therefore, it be the right

* Leviathan, Chap. IV. Part I.

ordering of names that constitutes truth, yet the only criterion of that rectitude of order is the mind's perception, whether of the reality of the thing, or the necessity of the relation, the existence of which is thus affirmed.

Truth, therefore, supposes reality, precisely as a sign implies something signified; and in our general reasonings the real danger, I apprehend, is not that we use words without meaning, but that we do not restrict them to the same.

§ 17. Mr. Locke's definition of truth seems substantially the same with that of Hobbes; a coincidence, we may observe, not singular in the writings of these two philosophers, and of which I do not know that Mr. Locke has any where taken notice, though it apply to some of the most valuable of his speculations. In the 5th Chapter of Book IV. of the Essay on Human Understanding, Truth is said to signify nothing but the joining or separating of signs, as the things signified by them do agree or disagree with one another. "The joining or separating of signs is what, by another name, we call proposition; so that truth properly belongs only to propositions; whereof there are two sorts; viz. mental and verbal; as there are two sorts of signs commonly made use of, viz.

ideas and words." "Mental propositions," he adds, "are those in which our ideas are joined or separated without the use of words, by the mind perceiving or judging of their agreement or disagreement; and verbal propositions are words, the signs of our ideas, put together or separated in affirmative or negative sentences; so that proposition consists in the joining or separating of signs; and truth consists in the joining or separating those signs, according as the things they stand for agree or disagree."

§ 18. This distinction of propositions into mental and verbal, seems somewhat questionable. Any verbal proposition is no otherwise intelligible than as we mentally refer to the things signified by the words of it; and with respect to mental propositions, abstracted from all use of words or conventional signs, I doubt whether they be possible, consistently with the strict meaning of the term. I can, indeed, *perceive* or *judge* of the existence of a relation between any two of my ideas, without thinking of the names that belong to them. But I cannot even to myself *propound* that existence as a general *truth*, without the employment of signs of some kind or other. Moreover, to speak of our *ideas* as being the *signs* of

things, in any ordinary sense of the word sign, has either no meaning at all, or not a true one. The use of a sign essentially supposes the previous experience or knowledge of the thing signified.

A similar objection may be made to the distinction which Mr. Locke subjoins of Truth, as either verbal or real. Truth, which is not *real*, is no Truth at all; and that which is real does not become *true*, till stated, whether tacitly or articulately, in *proposition*.

Mr. Locke, in his following chapter, proceeds to explain this doctrine farther, by observing that certainty is two-fold; of truth and of knowledge. "Certainty of truth," he says, "is when our verbal propositions exactly represent the agreement and disagreement of the ideas which they stand for, while certainty of knowledge is to perceive the agreement or disagreement of ideas as expressed in any proposition." But it is plain that each of these certainties involves the other; a truth is certain only as we certainly know that which it affirms to be.

These, and almost every other inconsistency in which Mr. Locke has involved himself on this subject, result immediately from the ideal hypothesis which he had so gratuitously taken up; the accuracy of which it was surprising he was never

once led to question by the sense of those very embarrassments wherewith it had entangled his doctrine, and the attempts to obviate which, however ineffectual, recur so repeatedly in the course of his work*.

* See Appendix, Note A.

II.

§ 1. "SEEING," says Mr. Hobbes, "that truth consisteth in the right ordering of names in our affirmations, a man that seeketh precise truth had need to remember what every name he useth stands for, and to place it accordingly, else he will find himself entangled in words, as a bird in lime twigs; the more he struggles, the more belimed." And he adds, "By this appears how necessary it is for any man that aspires to true knowledge to examine the definitions of former authors, and either to correct them, where they are negligently set down, or to make them himself. For the errors of definitions multiply themselves accordingly as the reckoning proceeds; and lead men into absurdities which at last they see, but cannot avoid, without reckoning anew from the beginning, in which lies the foundation of their errors *."

* Leviathan, Part I. Chap. IV. The rest of the passage is equally remarkable. "From whence it happens that they which trust to books, at last finding the error visible, and not mistrusting their first grounds, know not how to clear them-

I shall prefer no other apology than is involved in this passage, for much of the following remark on the misapplication and misapprehension of terms, which I think is observable in the language of many of our most distinguished writers on these

selves; as birds that, entering at a chimney, flutter at the false light of a window, for want of wit to consider which way they came in. So that in the right definition of names lies the first use of speech, which is the acquisition of science; and in wrong, or no definition, lies the first abuse, from which proceed all false and senseless tenets, which make those men that take their instruction from the authority of books, and not from their own meditation, to be as much below the condition of ignorant men, as men of true science are above it. For between true science and erroneous doctrine, ignorance is in the middle. Natural sense and imagination are not subject to absurdity. Nature herself cannot err; and as men abound in copiousness of language, so they become more wise or more mad than ordinary. Nor is it possible without letters for any man to become either excellently wise or excellently foolish. For words are wise men's counters, they do but reckon with them; but they are the money of fools, that value them by the authority of an Aristotle, or Cicero, or a Thomas, or any other doctor whatsoever, if but a man."

It is but justice to Mr. Hobbes to admit, that he is singularly free from the fault which he here imputes to writers in general. His philosophy was shallow enough, but as far as it went, it was admirably precise, clear, and consistent.

subjects. Nor let it be said that some of the distinctions on which we may insist, involve matter rather of philological nicety than important in a purely scientific point of view. For, in fact, excess of this kind is in these researches impossible. The science itself is one purely of analysis; and our distinctions cannot be too refined as long as they are just.

§ 2. No writer has insisted more forcibly than Mr. Locke upon the importance of grounding all our reasonings in every department upon a strict and clear definition of the terms employed. His own practice, however, is very far from an invariable observation of the rule; and even where it is otherwise, there is often a vagueness and indistinctness in his definitions, which tend rather to perplex than to enlighten the discussion. Indeed I think it must be admitted, that it is not either in the depth or the originality of its purely metaphysical disquisition, that the value of the Essay upon the Human Understanding chiefly consists; but in the vein of clear and masterly remark upon the *exercise* of the discerning faculties, as they are employed (according to his own limitation of his object) *about the objects with which they have to do*, which runs through the whole; and still

more perhaps in the admirable comment which the work itself affords on its own precepts, by the impress which it every where bears of a profound disregard of all merely verbal or captious disputations, and of a strong and uncompromising anxiety for truth. It is indeed hardly possible to dwell upon it without imbibing something of that masculine simplicity of tone and purpose, which constitutes its prevailing character; and which, whatever becomes of its philosophy, will more than any other quality secure to it a high and lasting place among the productions of human genius *.

§ 3. The faculty, which is commonly understood by the term reason †, Mr. Locke seems to call knowledge, or judgment. "The mind," says he, Chap. xiv. "has two faculties conversant about truth and falsehood. First, knowledge, whereby it certainly perceives the agreement and disagreement of any idea; secondly, judgment, which is the putting together or separating ideas in the mind, when these contain agreement or disagree-

* See the Quarterly Review, of Mr. Stewart's second Dissertation, for an able view of the peculiar merits and character of Mr. Locke's work.

† See Appendix, Note B.

ment, is not perceived but presumed to be so." This faculty of the mind, when it is exercised immediately about things, he had before said, is called judgment; when about truths, delivered in words, is most commonly called dissent, or assent.

There is an obvious confusion in the application of the term judgment here; and at any rate it is inaccurate to oppose knowledge to judgment, as different *faculties* of the mind. Knowledge, as Dr. Reid has observed, is not properly a faculty at all; and it is from *belief* and not judgment that it should be contradistinguished.

A similar inaccuracy seems to prevail in the contradistinction of judgment from assent; assent, again, is not a faculty, but that act or state of the mind which is the result of the exercise of judgment.

It is with the like looseness of language that Mr. Locke, in his next chapter, opposes demonstration to probability. The opposite of probability is not demonstration, but *certainty*; and demonstration applies to both. For we can as properly be said to demonstrate the probability of an event, as the certainty of a truth.

§ 4. "The difference between probability and certainty, faith and knowledge," says Mr. Locke,

“ lies in this, that in all the parts of our knowledge there is intuition; each immediate idea has its visible and certain connection; in belief not so. That which makes me believe is something extraneous to the thing I believe, something not evidently joined to the ideas under consideration, and so not manifestly shewing their agreement or disagreement. And the grounds of probability,” he says, “ are the two following: first, the conformity of any thing with our knowledge, observation, and experience; and, secondly, the testimony of others, vouching their observation and experience.” This last ground is perhaps included in the former.

This statement of the grounds of belief is just; and the consideration of them may, perhaps, be found to suggest a more specific and essential difference thence arising between belief and knowledge than has yet been pointed out. Belief is not a kind or degree of knowledge, for knowledge properly admits neither of kinds or degrees; it may, indeed, be said to be obscure, or even mistaken, in which cases there is not a *diminution* but positive *defect* of knowledge, which term is improperly applied to the states of mind in question. A learner who had not quite seized the demonstration of the 47th Proposition of the

Elements, could never express his want of certain knowledge, by saying he *believed* the theorem to be true. If he believed it, it must be on the authority of Pythagoras or Euclid, and not from any thing in the demonstration. In fact, until he understands it wholly, he *knows* nothing.

Our knowledge of a *thing*, indeed, is often spoken of as imperfect; and justly, because it is commonly *partial*. What we do know we must know perfectly; but that may be very little, and in the case of all actual existences is so. The only subjects of complete knowledge, as Locke has told us, are our own abstract ideas, which *being* only so far as they are understood, our knowledge of them when distinct is necessarily perfect. Hence it is in the perception of the relations of these that alone we attain to conclusions of necessary truth. It is upon such that the fabric of the mathematical science is grounded; "the only one," says Hobbes, "that Providence hath hitherto vouchsafed to man."

On the other hand, *belief*, which, as an act of mind, should always be distinguished from that passion of our nature called *expectation*, admits of infinite gradations; being founded, in fact, on the calculation of past experiences and possible analogies, its degrees are as unlimited as the combination of number itself. It

is true that we may attain to *assurance* in both cases; and when we distinguish between an event as impossible or improbable, our distinction respects merely the nature or ground of our conclusion, without affecting our conviction of the certainty of the event, which may be as great and unavoidable in the one case as in the other. That a die of a thousand faces should turn up the same one a thousand times running is not impossible, and yet we no more expect it to happen than that it should turn up a face which it did not possess. Nay, if it did happen before our eyes, I believe no possible evidence would be sufficient to make us believe that the event was not the result of unfair contrivance. A thing cannot be more or less impossible, but there are absolutely no limits to the degrees of improbability, which, like the asymptotes of the hyperbola, may be said to be continually approaching to impossibility, without ever reaching it.

§ 5. The view which Dr. Reid has taken of the several particular faculties of the mind, is hardly more accurate or discriminating than that which we find in Locke. Reid was a diligent and dispassionate man, who brought to these researches the important requisites of a perfect freedom from

prejudice, and a sincere zeal for truth ; qualities, which, under the guidance of plain good sense, enabled him to detect absurdities and sophisms which had escaped the perception of understandings infinitely superior to his own ; and his " Inquiry," it must be admitted, was, in this point of view, a work of great merit and value. But, when from questioning the conclusions of others, or rather the premises from which they had drawn those conclusions, he proceeded to state his own views of the philosophy of mind, these virtues could avail him little in a department of research in which, above all others, clearness of perception, and accuracy of distinction are indispensable. But such were far from forming the characteristic features of Dr. Reid's understanding ; and accordingly the want of precision, both in notion and language, (the one, indeed, involved the other,) which prevails throughout his " Essays," render it, notwithstanding the many judicious remarks with which it abounds, one of the least satisfactory and conclusive works of its kind.

§ 6. Locke, we have seen, has distinguished two faculties of the mind as conversant about truth and falsehood ; knowledge, when the per-

ception of the agreement of our ideas is certain ; judgment, when it is not certain, but probable only. Reid (Essay vi. ch. xi.) justly objects to the designation of knowledge as a *faculty*, and seems disposed to ascribe both these perceptions to what he calls *judgment* ; at the expense, as it seems to me, of a distinction which is indicated, not less by the ordinary use of language than by the nature of the things themselves.

“ In persons come to years of understanding,” says Reid, “ judgement necessarily accompanies all sensation, perception by sense, consciousness and memory ; but not conception. It is evident that a man who feels pain, judges and believes that he feels pain ; that one who perceives an object, believes that it exists.”

But are these the same acts of mind ? or would the use of language allow us to say that I *believe*, or *judge* I feel pain ? or do we *believe* that we see a table, in the way that we believe that it exists when we do not see it ?

He adds, that “ when we speak of seeing or remembering any thing, we hardly ever add that we *judge* it to be true, merely because it is an obvious superfluity ; since what we see and remember we must judge to be true ; and so in speaking of any thing self-evident or demonstrated,

because every one knows that we must judge that to be true which we hold to be self-evident."

It might have occurred to Reid, that in all these cases we say, without impropriety, that we *know* it to be true; and if the word judgment could not properly be used in such instances, it affords a sufficient presumption of the truth of the distinction between knowledge and judgment which Locke had laid down *.

§ 7. In his next chapter of *Common Sense*, he identifies this faculty with *judgment*, which, he says, is the vulgar, though not the philosophical acceptation of the word, "Seeing and hearing, by philosophers, are called senses, because we have ideas by them; by the vulgar they are called *senses*, because we *judge* by them. We judge of colour by the eye, of sounds by the ears, &c.; of beauty and deformity by taste; of right and wrong in conduct by our moral sense." I do not see the drift of this remark. Dr. Reid cannot mean to confound our sensations with the judgments the mind forms upon them. The vulgar do not employ this distinction, because it is not wanted for any common purpose of life. Philo-

* See Appendix, Note C.

sophers have made it, because it is necessary to a distinct knowledge of the operation of our minds; and in making it have been obliged to restrict the word *sense*, in the manner which Dr. Reid seems to object to.

Dr. Reid's notions of *common sense* require, however, the more consideration, from the paramount authority in philosophy which he is known to have ascribed to the power so designated, and which, in fact, from their frequent appeal to its decision, has given to his doctrines, and to those of his school, their distinctive name. By common sense, then, he here states himself to mean nothing more than common judgment; and contends that it is absurd to suppose there can be any opposition between it and reason. 'Reason,' he observes, 'has two offices or degrees: first, to judge of things self-evident; secondly, to draw conclusions that are not self-evident from those that are. The first is the sole province of common sense; and, therefore, it coincides with reason throughout its whole extent, and is only another name for one branch or degree of reason. Why, then, give it another name?' He answers, 'why abolish a name which is universal in all languages? Moreover, the degree of reason it expresses is one common to all men, and purely the gift of heaven; whereas

the other is learned by practice and rules. It is, therefore, clearly distinguishable, and so entitled to a distinct name.'

There can be no question of abolishing the term, but only of precluding its application in matters with which it has properly nothing to do. Common sense, indeed, supposes reason for its basis—but it is distinguishably reason as conversant with a class of subjects, which are foreign to the scope of metaphysical inquiry. The very points it discusses, the difficulties it professes to resolve, are such as common sense, as it takes no interest in them, so it does not even profess to apprehend. Would it have been an answer to Copernicus, or Galileo, to plead that their doctrine of the motion of the earth contradicted *the common sense* of mankind? No one ever appealed to such a tribunal in any question of the higher mathematics, though some of its conclusions sound sufficiently strange to unlearned apprehensions, and it is as absurd to attempt to extend its jurisdiction to any other department of abstract science. Tell a man gifted with any degree of common judgment, but who has hitherto exercised that gift only about the matters that properly belong to it, that we do not *see* one object to be more distant than another; or to have more than two dimensions; and he will

say that the proposition contradicts his common sense—explain to him the grounds of it, and he will admit its truth ; but this only by the exercise of *reason*, as superseding that of the coarser sort of judgment, which is implied in the former term.

The fact would seem, that common sense is *reason*, referring exclusively to *conduct* ; being that kind of it which is necessary for the guidance of men in the ordinary affairs of life. I say *ordinary*, because in cases of unusual difficulty, we do not think even common sense competent to decide—it then becomes the province of *wisdom*. Its objects, therefore, are *actions*, their motives or their consequences ; and it is, I apprehend, an abuse of the term to apply it in any case to conclusions of knowledge, whether founded on perceptions of necessary truth, or inductions of *invariable* experience. Thus it is improper to say, I know by common sense, that twice three make six ; or that the days will be shorter in winter than in summer ; but common sense might tell me that the odds are against a die's turning up the same face three times running ; or that if I defer my voyage till December, I incur the risk of bad weather. The exclusive field of common sense, therefore, is, the *probable* ; and we may add, it considers even the probable only in reference to

human conduct, or those contingencies of which we have had experience. Of the probabilities of an hypothesis in science, or of a speculation in theology, it is not properly within the province of common sense to decide. The two offices and degrees of reason which Reid speaks of, are obviously to be distinguished as Reason and Reasoning. This last is distinguishable from the first, merely because the *process* it involves requires an exercise of the *active* and associating powers of the mind to bring the object, with all its relations, more closely and distinctly under the cognizance of her perceptions. But as far as any *step* is made towards our conclusion, it is plain that the act of the mind is the same in every stage of the deduction as in the first. The act by which, at the close of the demonstration, we perceive the equality of the square of the hypotenuse to those of the opposite sides, is precisely the same with that by which we perceive that the whole is greater than its part. We cannot deny the one, without contradicting conclusions already admitted as certain ; or the other, without contradicting the very meaning of the words employed in the proposition. “ But,” says Reid, “ I recur to common sense rather in the *ex-absurdo* refutation of your propositions. In metaphysics, as in mathematics, if your conclusion

shocks the dictate of common sense, I am entitled to reject it, though I may not be able to shew the fallacy of reasoning that led to it." Why not, then, use the appropriate term? A conclusion that shocks or contradicts our reason, is, by definition, an absurd one, and no one ever quarrelled with such a criterion of refutation. But Dr. Reid must have found some difficulty in applying this test to the conclusion in question, or he would hardly have gone out of his way to resort to so vague and (on these subjects) so invidious a term as *common sense*.

It may be added, too, that in the cases to which Reid has applied his test, the appeal to the common sense of mankind, is merely an appeal to their *common persuasion*. Now no one ever disputed the *fact* of that persuasion; the enquiry was simply as to the *grounds* of it. To allege, therefore, the persuasion itself in refutation of any conclusion to which these inquiries might lead us, seems unjustifiable by the very condition of the argument. All that common sense could do, and what it reasonably may do in such a case, is to refuse to go into the discussion at all. It might say to the sceptic, you admit that your arguments can neither increase nor diminish my persuasion practically, why, then, should I trouble myself to consider them?

§ 8. But without insisting longer upon this question as one merely verbal, and admitting that it is the same faculty of mind, call it either reason, or judgment, or common sense, that decides of truth, whether it be necessary or contingent, certain or probable; the only question is, what is it in the grounds of these conclusions that is supposed to distinguish the *certainty* with which we respectively repose on them.

“Truths,” says Reid, “may be distinguished into two classes. They are either necessary and immutable, the contrary of which is impossible; or they are contingent and mutable, depending upon some effect of will or power, which had a beginning and may have an end. That a cone is the third part of a cylinder of the same base and the same altitude is a *necessary* truth. That the sun is the centre, about which the earth and the other planets perform their revolution, is a truth, but it is not a necessary but a contingent truth. It depends upon the will of the Being who made and supports the system, whereas the former truth depends not upon the will and power of any being.”

He adds, “that the ordinary distinction between abstract truths and those which concern matters of fact of real existence, coincides with

that here given, with the exception of our knowledge of the existence and nature of the Supreme Being."

§ 9. I do not object to the use of these distinctions, but, perhaps, it would lead to a better understanding of the grounds of them, to observe, that a *truth* cannot strictly be said to be *mutable* any more than *knowledge* can be *uncertain*. The existences, respecting the relations of which the mind affirms any truth, may no doubt be changed by Almighty Power; but this cannot affect the truth of the proposition itself, which applied only to those relations at a given time. That the moon is this day nearer to us than the sun, is *true*; but it is in the power of God to remove the first to a distance beyond the latter, when the same proposition, if applied to this new state of things, would be no longer true. The truth of the former proposition is, however, not affected by this, which is quite a distinct one. It cannot, therefore, be said to be changed. It would have been otherwise, had the first proposition been, that the moon will always be nearer to us than the sun; but then, this proposition never was true, never at least was *known* to be so.

Nor can a truth properly be said to be contingent.

The distinction of necessary and contingent existence respects only our own minds, and may have no foundation in the nature of things. All that we mean when we say that one thing exists necessarily and another contingently is, that we know the grounds and reasons of the one existence, but that we do not of the other. In either case, the fact of their present existence is not at all concerned, since that is manifestly implied in the use of the term *exists* at all. Now in this sense all particular existences, save One, are contingent. We know nothing of the immediate ground or cause of their existence; but as we can affirm only as we know or perceive, it follows, that no proposition concerning any such existence, can be understood to refer to those relations of its being, of which, by the very application of the term *contingency*, we admit ourselves to know nothing.

Take the instance before given. That the distance of the sun is greater than that of the moon, if it be a truth at all, is as necessary a one as that a cone is equal to the third of a cylinder of the same base and altitude; for it results as necessarily from the respective position of these two bodies to our planet. Nor can you object that it is that position which is the object of the proposition. It is not the position, but the relation of

distance which that position involves, that is affirmed. The place of the bodies in question you gather from other considerations; whether accurately or otherwise, it matters not. If falsely, the truth announced in the proposition is neither necessary nor contingent, since it does not exist at all. Of the future position, or even existence of these bodies, we know nothing; a fact which we imply by the use of the word contingent; it follows, then, that whatever we affirm concerning them, cannot, except hypothetically, have any possible reference to that future position or existence.

And as it is necessarily true, so properly understood, it is *eternally* so.

It may be true, indeed, that we cannot attain the same certainty in our propositions respecting the relations of external existences as in those which concern only our own abstract ideas; but all that follows from this is, that we cannot be equally sure in the two cases that they are *true* at all; nor that as far as they are so, they are true after a different manner. Accordingly, I believe that in every proposition we make concerning real existence, the *certainty* which we ascribe to our conclusions is grounded upon some hypothesis, which though no one disputes, no one can be perfectly sure of: such

are the laws of motion, upon the supposition of which Newton has demonstrated the system of the universe.

§ 10. Truth, as the object of *belief*, I apprehend is purely hypothetical. It is grounded upon the supposition that the future will be like the past. These truths are not less *necessary* than any other, for they result as directly from the calculations of past probabilities, as does the product of any given arithmetical computation. I may add, that in this case it is the *hypothesis* only which is the object of the mind's belief, of which we have seen the proper ground is *experience*. I am not properly said to believe a truth, though I may believe it to be true; a little reflection on the ground of this difference of expression, will at once lead us to apprehend the distinction I allude to.

I am disposed to urge the same objection against the distinction of abstract truths and those concerning real existence, if, as most writers seem to admit, it implies any difference whatever as to the certainty or necessity of the truths in question. This, indeed, is clearly the case, as respects all *past* facts. That I eat my breakfast this morning is surely a truth concerning real existence; and, if true at

all, it is one which Omnipotence itself can no more affect or change, than it can destroy the relation between the three angles of a triangle and two right ones.

Nor let it be said that the objections we have here suggested are chiefly verbal. Were it even so, they might not be without their use in a science, some of the most valuable speculations of which, as hitherto cultivated, often terminate in no better results than the precise and definite use of words. But I conceive they are something more than verbal; for implying the conclusion that truth is one and the same thing in every instance, they preclude that notion of its comparative uncertainty in some cases, of which sceptics have availed themselves, as a ground of presumption of its possible uncertainty in all *.

* We have before disclaimed any purpose to object to the distinction itself, the convenience of which could hardly be dispensed with, and which is founded on a real ground of difference; though it is useful to bear in mind what it is in which that ground properly consists.

III.

§ 1. IN his fourth chapter of the same essay, Dr. Reid comes to treat of first principles in general. These he describes as that class of propositions, the truth of which is not ascertained by argument, but which are no sooner understood than they are believed. Of these are all such as are commonly called axioms, principles of common sense, common notions, self-evident truths. That there are such, Dr. Reid takes for granted. The ancient philosophers considered that all knowledge must be grounded on such, and that there could be no reasoning without them. But, he observes, that Mr. Locke seemed to think first principles of very small use.

§ 2. I may remark that this is not quite an accurate account of Mr. Locke's opinion. It was not that he considered first principles of small use, but the *formal statement* of any given number of them, as the grounds of our subsequent reasonings. Whether these truths be generally stated as principles or not, the mind necessarily applies

them in every instance ; their truth, in the particular case being quite as self-evident as in the general theorem *.

§ 3. Dr. Reid proceeds to lay down the following propositions concerning *first principles*. “ First, I hold it to be certain, and even demonstrable, that all knowledge got by reasoning must be built on first principles.”

It is apparent, from what Dr. Reid says afterwards, that he merely means that all demonstrative knowledge is founded upon intuitive. If he means that every truth that we perceive intuitively is a first principle, the number of these will be very large. If, again, it is ultimate generalization of these particular intuitions that he intends by first principles, the proposition is not true. It is rather the reverse of true. For the general truth may more properly be said to be built on the particular. It is not from knowing that the whole is

* The use of the mathematical axioms is, in reality, not in the *perception* of proofs but in their *enunciation*; in the course of which it is often necessary to refer to some such general principle, as that things that are equal to a third are equal to each other; not at all to assist the chain of the reader's ideas, but to connect the links of the demonstration, as stated either *vivâ voce* or upon paper.

greater than its part, that we perceive that a circle is greater than any segment of it. It is rather by the exemplification of this instance that we should soonest make a child comprehend the proposition itself.

§ 4. Dr. Reid's second proposition is, that some first principles yield conclusions that are certain ; others, such as are probable in various degrees, from the highest probability to the lowest. " For," he adds, " in just reasoning, the strength or weakness of the conclusion will always correspond to that of the principles on which it is grounded." Yet as all first principles are assumed as self-evident, I do not understand how he can talk of the comparative *weakness* of the evidence of any such, or of the low degree of probability of the conclusions immediately derived from it. Self-evidence does not admit of degrees.

" In a matter of testimony," he says, " it is self-evident that the testimony of two is better than one, supposing them equal in character, and in their means of knowledge ; yet the single testimony may be true, and that which is preferred to it may be false." This, so far from being self-evident, seems to me not to be true. Where the good faith, and means of knowledge of the wit-

nesses are supposed equal, the testimony of one person is as good as that of a thousand. It is because, in practice, we never can certainly make this supposition; and because, however circumstances may be supposed to have occurred to disturb the perceptions or corrupt the good faith of one individual, it is less likely, judging from experience, that they should coincide in producing the same deceit or illusion in several, that we admit it as a general principle, that two witnesses are better than one. But this last principle, though true, is not self-evident, for we have seen a good reason can be given for it.

“When an experiment,” says Dr. R. “has succeeded in several trials, and the circumstances have been marked with care, there is a self-evident probability of its succeeding in a new trial.” This proposition may involve either of *two* first principles: either it may mean that a conclusion drawn from repeated experiments is self-evidently more probable than if grounded only on one; or that there is a self-evident probability that an experiment once made will succeed again. The former principle is apparently that which Dr. Reid had in view; and though true, it may be denied to be self-evident, precisely on the ground that we refused that title to the one last mentioned: could

we be sure that no change had occurred in the circumstances, the repetition of the experiment would *not* increase our conviction. It is only its tendency to assure us from the intervention of accidental circumstances that gives to that repetition its weight in our conclusions. Here, again, therefore, we have a reason for the principle, which is consequently not a self-evident one. The second case is altogether different, and one which we shall have occasion to consider afterwards.

Dr. Reid proceeds ; “ In games of chance it is a first principle that every side of a die has an equal chance to be turned up, and that in a lottery every ticket has an equal chance of being drawn out. From such first principles as these, which are the best we can have in such a matter, we may deduce, by demonstrative reasoning, the precise degree of probability of every event in such games.” Nothing, I think, more evinces the deficient precision of Dr. Reid’s ideas on these subjects, than his giving to such palpable *suppositions* as these, the names of First Principles of Truth. He might equally so term the proportions of value assigned in any rule-of-three sum. Although, these ratios, whether of value or chance, being *given*, we can equally in both cases demonstrate the result.

§ 5. Dr. Reid's *third* proposition is, that it would greatly contribute to the stability and improvement of human knowledge, if the first principles upon which the various parts of it are grounded, were pointed out and ascertained. He instances the good effect of this practice in the cases of mathematical and natural philosophy :

And the *fourth* is, that nature has not left us without a criterion whereby we may decide on any difference about first principles. He admits that we cannot, in this controversy, adopt the test applied in every other, by referring to more general principles admitted on both sides. But this disadvantage he conceives is compensated by advantages. "For, first," he says, "in such controversies every man is a competent judge ; and therefore it is difficult to impose on mankind :"

"Secondly, opinions which contradicts first principles are not only false but *absurd*, so that we deal with them, if not in the way of argument, at least by ridicule—the weapon which nature has furnished us with to expose absurdity."

Upon which two observations it may be remarked, that they imply the same *ignoratio*, or rather *oblivio elenchi*, to which we have before adverted ; by supposing that it is the *persuasion* of mankind, instead of the abstract grounds of that

persuasion, which forms the subject of dispute. It is obvious and easy to laugh at the conclusions of Mallebranche or Berkeley, but I believe no one ever did so, who really apprehended the reasonings on which they were founded; and certainly, however little those reasonings may compel our conviction, they open to us a view of the grounds and nature of our perception of external existence, of which the impression left on the mind is the very reverse of that of levity or ridicule.

Thirdly, Dr. Reid conceives that "the consent of ages and nations ought to have a great authority with regard to first principles, where every man is a judge." It should seem that if there be a case in which the consent of ages and nations can and need have no authority, it is precisely that of those "first principles where every man is a judge;" and where, in fact, every man *does* so judge for himself, that I believe it never occurred to any one to seek any other ground of his assurance than the self-evidence of the truth itself.

Moreover, I must repeat, that it is this very "consent of ages and nations," the explanation of which is the thing required. "Who can doubt," asks Dr. Reid, "whether men have universally believed in the existence of a material world? Who can doubt whether men have universally believed that every change in nature must

have a cause? Who can doubt," &c. To which we answer no one,—and least of all the sceptic, who makes the ground of this very universality of belief the object of his speculation.

"Fourthly," says Reid, "opinions that appear so early in the minds of men, that they cannot be the effect of education or false reasoning, have a good claim to be considered as first principles: and,

"Lastly, we may say the same of an opinion which is so necessary in the conduct of life, that without the belief of it a man must be led into a thousand absurdities in practice."

§ 6. The same subject has been treated of by Mr. Dugald Stewart, the able and eloquent disciple of Dr. Reid, who opens the second volume of his *Philosophy of the Human Mind*, with the consideration of those truths which Dr. Reid had called First Principles, but which he is disposed to class under the name of the "*Fundamental Laws of Human Belief*, or, *the Primary Elements of Human Reason* ; meaning," he says, "by these, those primary truths, a conviction of which is necessarily implied in all our thoughts and actions, and which seem on that account rather to form the elements of reason, than objects with which reason is conversant."

Upon this phraseology I shall only say, that to speak of any *truth* as being a *law* of belief, or an *element* of reason *, and not an object whether of belief or reason, involves either a very novel use of the words law and element, or some peculiar theory as to the nature of belief or reason. Reason, Mr. Stewart defines, to be the faculty whereby we distinguish truth from falsehood. How any thing, and least of all a *truth*, can be considered as an *element* of such a faculty, one is at a loss to understand.

Again: belief, he says, is the operation of the judgment deciding of truth. The application of the term *law* to any such operation, as far as it is proper at all, can only refer to our experience of the regular and uniform *manner* of its process. To speak of any *truth*, i. e. of any thing believed, as a *law* of belief; meaning of that faculty whereby any thing is believed; is a peculiarity of language so little justified by ordinary usage, that Mr. Stewart should have been more explicit in stating the grounds of it.

* He appears, indeed, at p. 43, to speak of these truths as elements of *reasoning*; in which case, the term is more admissible; but we shall see that he afterwards precludes any such limitation of its application by talking of them (p. 62) as "essential elements, which enter into the composition of reason itself."

§ 7. On the nature of the evidence which we have for the mathematical axioms, Mr. Stewart forbears to enlarge; respecting their proper use in the science of mathematics, he agrees wholly with Locke, that they are in no degree the foundation upon which it is built; since, as that philosopher had remarked, “a man might pore on them for ever without being able to educe from such meditation any single mathematical truth.” They have not, as Mr. Stewart observes, the most distant analogy to what are called *first principles* in natural philosophy; to those general facts, for example, of the gravity and elasticity of the air, from which may be deduced the doctrine of the Torricellian tube,—or to those laws of the motion of bodies, and of the reflection and refraction of light, to which Newton, in the commencement of his *Principia* and *Optics*, had improperly given the name of *axioms*. The principles of mathematical science, Mr. Stewart justly remarks, are not the *axioms*, but the *definitions*; which definitions hold in mathematics precisely the same place that is held in natural philosophy by such general *assumptions*, whether of fact or hypothesis, as have been just now referred to; and the criterion by which Mr. Stewart distinguishes the *principles* of reasoning, whether mathematical or moral, from what he calls the *elements*, is, that

from the former, consequences may be deduced, while from the latter, none ever can.

It is upon these circumstances, chiefly, that he grounds the analogy which he has supposed between the mathematical axioms and those elemental truths, whether in the science of matter or mind, which Dr. Reid calls first principles, but Mr. S. has designated as 'fundamental laws of human belief.' Such are our belief of the continuance of the laws of nature, and of a material world; of the existence of efficient causes; of the existence of other intelligent beings besides ourselves; our belief of our own existence and identity, and of the evidence of memory, &c. "All these, with many others, are," he says, "ultimate or elemental *laws of thought*, and the truths which form their *objects* (subjects?) are of an order so radically different from what are commonly called truths, in the popular acceptance of the word, that it might be useful for logicians to distinguish them by some appropriate appellation; such, for example, as that of metaphysical or transcendental truths. They are not (any more than the mathematical axioms) *principles* or *data* from which any consequence can be deduced, but form a part of those original *stamina* of human reason, which are equally essential to all the pur-

suits of science, and all the active concerns of life."

P. 58. A little further (p. 62), he speaks of them as "*essential elements* which enter into the composition of reason itself."

I again profess myself utterly incapable, consistently with any known meaning of the words in question, of conceiving in what sense a truth can be called a *law* of thought or belief, or still more can be said to enter as an *essential element* into the *composition* of human reason*.

§ 8. Moreover, I am disposed to question the coincidence which Mr. Stewart remarks, between these truths and the mathematical axioms: viz. that no inference of any kind can be deduced from

* It is right to observe, however, that Mr. Stewart himself had formed a very different opinion respecting the propriety of this language. The following passage bears decisive testimony to this point; and, indeed, combined with the criticism in the text, affords an amusing illustration of the opposite points of view in which a matter so apparently simple may strike different understandings. "To denominate," says Mr. S. "such laws of belief as we have now been considering, *constituent elements of human reason*, while it seems quite unexceptionable in point of technical distinctness, cannot be justly censured as the slightest deviation from our habitual forms of speech." Vol. II. p. 66.

them. "From such propositions," says he, "as these, I exist—I am the same person to-day that I was yesterday :—the general laws of nature will continue in future to operate uniformly, as in time past—no inference can be deduced, any more than from the intuitive truths prefixed to the Elements of Euclid. Abstracted from other data, they are perfectly barren in themselves, nor can any possible combination of them help the mind a single step in its progress *."

This is so far from being true, that, on the contrary, some of the most important conclusions of human knowledge or belief have been immediately deduced from these truths, and these alone. From the elemental truth, that I exist, combined with another—that every existence must have a cause—we deduce the being of God. From the consideration of my identity to-day and yesterday, I infer my responsibility now for what I did yesterday. Upon the assumption of the continuance of the laws of nature, we distinctly ground the whole of our reasonings and expectations, whether as to the

* Descartes, at least, was of a different opinion, who, in the simple fact, "cogito," conceived he had found a basis sufficiently wide for the whole superstructure of human knowledge.

course of human conduct, or the laws of physical science. It is perfectly true, that it is not on any such general statement of these truths, that we draw the particular conclusion, which is always self-evident in itself; and so far, we may remark, a coincidence between them and the mathematical axioms. The distinction between them consists in this,—that these truths are not purely abstract, but include a distinct reference to *particular* or *actual existence*. The logical maxims which Locke assimilates to the mathematical, are these:—whatever *is*, *is* :—a thing cannot be, and, at the same time not be—and from such it is, as Locke observes, as impossible to draw any conclusion, as to build any mathematical theorem upon the axiom, that the whole is greater than its part, or that things equal to the same are equal to each other. But the elemental truths which Mr. Stewart enumerates, it is plain, affirm no such identical truisms as these, but are propositions of *fact*. If they are to be assimilated to the axioms of mathematics, it would be such as the 10th or 11th of Euclid, of which Mr. Stewart has justly observed, that they are not properly maxims, but theorems, which ought to be demonstrated *.

* This is speaking generally; for, in fact, the same objection may be made to Mr. Stewart's classification of Ele-

§ 9. As a second coincidence, between the mathematical axioms and those other propositions, which he has comprehended under the general title of Fundamental Laws of Human Belief, Mr. Stewart remarks, that as the truth of axioms is virtually presupposed in the successive steps of every demonstration, so in every step of our reasonings concerning the order of nature, we proceed on the supposition, that the laws by which it is regulated will continue uniform, as in time past, and that the material universe has an existence independent of our perceptions. "I need scarcely add," he continues, "that in all our reasonings, whether they relate to necessary or contingent truth, our own personal identity, and the evidence of memory, are virtually taken for granted."

It would seem, from the wording of this doctrine, that the truths in question are rather *presupposed* than admitted as known—rather postulates than axioms. But in fact it is in the highest degree unphilosophical to class them to-

mental Truths, that he has made to Euclid's, viz. they include truths of a very different nature. That I exist, and that the sun will rise to-morrow, are plainly propositions differing not less in the *grounds* than in the degree of their certainty.

gether under one common head. That the whole is greater than its part; or whatever is, is; like every other purely abstract generalization, whether logical or mathematical, is a mere identical proposition, similar to the formula $a=a$, into which some philosophers have said that all mathematical truth is resolvable. On the contrary, that the course of nature will be the same in future as in the past, is not properly a truth at all; for as we know and can know nothing about the future, the term *truth* is inapplicable to any conclusion respecting it absolutely—but it is wholly an *hypothesis* of our own; as such, as in every other case of hypothetical reasoning, it necessarily forms the *conditions* on which in every step it proceeds; an office which, I may observe, by no means belongs to the mathematical axioms, as there is no problem in the science which would not be perfectly intelligible to a person who had never heard or thought of them in his life.

§ 10. As for our own personal identity and the evidence of memory, it is not in our reasonings, so much as in the use of language at all, that these truths are taken for granted; and so far as they are susceptible of being made propositions at all, I am disposed to admit they may

be classed with the first-mentioned set ; being, like them, reducible to the fundamental formulas, that $a=a$, or that whatever is—is.

I may here remark that Mr. Stewart objects to "the common doctrine of our best philosophers," that it is by the evidence of consciousness we are assured that we ourselves exist. "We are conscious," he observes, "of sensation and thought, but we are not conscious of the existence of mind, nor could we ever have arrived at the knowledge of it previous to some impression on our external senses. From such an impression we learn two facts at once—The existence of the sensation, and our own as sentient beings. But it is of the former only that we can rigorously be said to be conscious: our conviction of the latter is posterior to it in the order, if not of time, of nature; as it supposes consciousness already awakened, and is evidently rather a judgment accompanying the exercise of that power than one of its immediate intimations."

This doctrine does not seem so new as Mr. Stewart supposes, for it is apparently upon these grounds that Descartes chose to derive his knowledge of his existence, not directly, as a subject of consciousness, but by inference, from the fact of his thinking. The objection to both is the

same, that the first term of the enthymeme involves the second. It cannot be, it has been said, because *I think*, or because *I feel*, that I know my own existence, since this knowledge is obviously implied in the very acts of feeling and thinking.

§ 11. Perhaps, however, it may be found, that the term *knowledge* is improperly applied to these truths at all, since all knowledge supposes them. At any rate I believe, it is not at the first experience of sensation* that our existence becomes properly an object of knowledge, but on our first perception of *external existence*. The mere notion of *I*—of *myself*, supposes that of something *not myself*. It is difficult at least to conceive how we could have the one without the other. They are plainly the *subjects* rather than the *objects* of *knowledge*—and a thing cannot at once be both. The very term knowledge is unintelligible as distinguished from the *I*, or *personal principle* in which it resides. The error, I apprehend, has arisen from confounding our consciousness of our existence with the *propositions* by which alone the fact of it can be made cognizable to our *know-*

* If it be in sensation that the knowledge of our existence first takes place, it must respect the *negation* of ourselves as the *cause* of that sensation.

ledge properly so called. Descartes' enthymeme is absurd if intended either to assist his conviction of his existence, or to explain the manner in which he attains that conviction ; but it is intelligible if considered merely as the mode of stating the proposition to others.

§ 12. That we cannot be properly said to be conscious of our own personal identity, Mr. Stewart considers as still more indisputable, " inasmuch as the very idea of personal identity involves the idea of time, and, consequently, pre-supposes the exercise not only of consciousness but memory."

We admit that any proposition concerning our personal identity is intelligible only on a pre-supposition of the exercise of memory ; but, surely, it is still more evident, that every exercise of memory itself pre-supposes the consciousness of our personal identity. The fact is only a fresh illustration of the reality of the distinction we have pointed out, between the truths which are the objects of our knowledge, and the facts which form the subjects of our consciousness * ; and it is only

* There is a want of a term here to distinguish the subjects of our consciousness previous to their becoming the objects of knowledge, which renders it difficult to express oneself on this matter with strict precision. Properly we are not

by attending to this, that we shall understand the apparent paradox, that truths may form the objects of knowledge, the consciousness of which is pre-supposed in it. In this way, we properly say that we *know* that we exist; and our knowledge here is founded not upon mere consciousness, but, as all knowledge properly is, upon the perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas,—i.e. of what is intended by the terms *ourselves* and *existence*. And it is thus only that we can be said to *know* our existence.

In fine, the object of knowledge is truth. Truth implies a *proposition*; a proposition supposes the employment of signs; consequently, previous to the use of these, neither truth nor knowledge could, strictly speaking, have place. But it is plain, *consciousness* might and does; and, in fact, her domain is precisely that department of truths, or rather of judgments, which are not reducible to propositions, but are necessarily supposed in every such which the mind may make to itself.

Understood in this sense, I should agree with Mr. Stewart in his conclusion, that neither ex-

conscious either of a *truth* or a *fact*, but only of that which the mind, on the evidence of its own consciousness, perceives or affirms to be such.

istence nor personal identity are the objects of consciousness.

§ 13. Upon the whole, Mr. Stewart's opinions upon these subjects do not seem to differ materially from Dr. Reid's; otherwise than, for the reason we have seen, he objects to the application of the term *principle* to the truths in question; and, on the same ground chiefly, proposes to substitute the description of "fundamental laws of human belief, or constituent elements of human reason," instead of that of "principles of common sense" which his master had adopted. Another Scottish philosopher, Dr. Beattie, had, it seems, given the name *intuition* to the power whereby "we not only perceive the axioms of geometry, but recognize the authority * of the fundamental laws of belief, when we hear them enunciated in language." Mr. Stewart does not otherwise object to this application of the word, than as it seems to him not agreeable to common practice, which restricts the term *intuition* to the perception of truths like the geometrical axioms; and he suggests the term *reason* as a better substitute.

* We may observe that Mr. Stewart's language here is studiously consistent. We do not perceive these axioms as true; we *recognise their authority as laws*.

In proposing either of these words, as an indifferent alternative, Mr. Stewart has not precisely attended to their differing import. *Intuition* is not strictly a power of the mind, but a *manner* of its perception. We perceive by intuition, but intuition itself perceives nothing. So again, we do not perceive by reason ; it is the Reason within us that itself perceives all truth.

§ 14. Perhaps the following distribution of terms may seem as little objectionable as any that have been proposed ; and, at any rate, seem quite according to the use of them in common language ; a merit, I may observe, in scientific nomenclature, which has not only its obvious value in respect of convenience, but which involves a stronger presumption of the philosophical accuracy of the distinctions which they suppose, than has commonly been understood.

The power or faculty of the mind which *knows* and *judges*, I apprehend to be in itself the same, being modified only by the differing objects of its speculation.—That faculty we call Reason.

Reason perceives *truth* by intuition, and *probability* by judgment, and the result of one of these is knowledge, and of the other belief. I may add, the subject of truth is always some *pro-*

position, expressed or tacit ; of probability, some *fact*, whether actual or eventual. But it is plain that every fact may be stated as a proposition, and every truth may be considered as a fact. For a fact, as has been well observed, is in one sense only a particular truth ;—and truth, an universal fact.

In this way we may *know* a fact to be probable—we may *believe* a proposition to be true ; but in the one case, the proper object of our knowledge is not the fact, but the proposition which affirms its probability on a certain hypothesis—in the other, the proper object of our belief is not the proposition, but the probability of some fact wherewith it is connected.

§ 15. The object of knowledge is truth, and the subject of truth is existence. *Existence* then is not strictly an attribute of things, otherwise than as perceived by mind. We may be said to know things only as truths ; and, in fact, truths are the only things we properly know.

In saying we know things only as truths, I mean, we know things only *in relation*,—relation to other things, or to ourselves. This last relation is implied in the perception of all existence, however absolute. Now relation is confessedly

the creature of mind, and cannot exist but as perceived.

This will not affect the reality of things in themselves. It only regards our manner of knowing that reality. I do not *know the thing* ; as the very use of language shows us, in which such an expression would be improper ;—I know only its *existence*, i. e. the fact or manner of its relation to myself. But the certainty of this relation necessarily involves the reality of the two things related ; of the thing perceived, as well as of the mind perceiving. The reality of the object of the mind's perception, therefore, is as necessarily certain as that of its own existence.

The various manners of simple existence are expressible by the several tenses and moods of verbs. Something *is* ; for my knowledge of this I depend on present perception : something *was* ; on memory : something *has been* ; on inference from the present : something *will be* ; on inference from the past : something *must be* ; this I know from perception of necessary connexion : something *may be* ; from the absence of perceptible contradiction. And all these propositions alike form truths, which are all susceptible of equal certainty, differing only in the *conditions* in which they are founded ; so that instead of dividing truths

into necessary or contingent, perhaps it would be more accurate to distinguish propositions as absolute and hypothetical ; or as direct and conditional.

The various modifications of *judgment* may be arranged under the corresponding heads.

§ 16. With respect to the *reality* of our knowledge, we have seen that the arguments and tests offered by Locke and Reid are any thing but satisfactory. But, in fact, there is a kind of equivocation involved in the very doubt here proposed, the clearing up of which will tend much to the understanding of the matter. As *reality* itself is the proper object of knowledge, and all that we mean, when we say that a thing really is,—is that we know it to be ; it should seem that to speak of *knowledge* as not *real*,—that is, of the objects of knowledge not being really such as we know them, is tantamount to affirming, that what we know to be, others may know not to be—which is absurd.

But it will be said, is it not easily conceivable that things may in reality be otherwise than we know them to be,—that is, otherwise than they seem to us—or do we know of them any thing but their appearance ?

To which it may be answered, that this is in one sense not only conceivable, but certain. That

things will appear differently to beings, whose faculties enable them to know either more or less of them than we do, is inevitable. But it does not follow from hence, that what we do know of them, they can know otherwise. Of the properties of a triangle, a superior being must know infinitely more than we do ; but he cannot know,—he cannot, at least, be *conceived* to know, that its three angles are not equal to two right angles ; because our knowledge of that relation essentially excludes the conception of its being otherwise than we see it. If we could *conceive* of the three angles, as being actually greater than two right angles, we could not *know* them to be equal.

§ 17. The distinction between the reality and the appearance, is one made merely for our convenience in ordinary life, and does not at all apply to the present controversy. In respect of all abstract and general notions, it is plain, as Locke has told us, that our ideas are not, and cannot be any thing else than what they seem ; nor, in reality, is there any such difference in the instance of things themselves. When we say a thing appears differently from what it is, we merely mean that it presents a different appearance under some circumstances, from what it does under

others. An object seen through water, presents, in some respects, a different appearance from what it would if seen at the same distance through air only. Consequently a straight oar when half plunged in the water, looks crooked ; but there is properly no delusion in this, for clearly we see the two parts of the oar under differing circumstances ; nor, so far as they are separately concerned, is there any reason to say, that the appearance of the one is more true than that of the other.

In distinguishing the appearance from the reality of any thing, we commonly mean no more than to distinguish our perceptions of sight from those of touch. The former we know are subject to an infinite variety, according to the circumstances of position, or light, or distance, or medium under which they take place ; but the latter are always the same in the ordinary state of the organ : nor can we conceive them as being perceived differently by any other being whatsoever. Of the balls on the billiard-table before me, I can conceive a superior intelligence to perceive a thousand properties which are altogether hidden to me. Nay, I can understand a being formed with organs to perceive in them a colour or temperature totally different from what strikes my senses. But this, it is plain, implies no error

on my part ; since what it supposes is not a difference in the ball itself from what I apprehend in it, but a difference in one apprehending being from another ; and in this case there is no possible criterion whereby to judge of the two differing sensations. The sensation being wholly in the sentient being, it is necessarily true—if indeed the term *true* be properly applicable to mere sensation—which it is not, any more than to a pain or a pleasure. But of the shape, size, extension, and number of the balls, I cannot conceive the Supreme Intelligence himself to apprehend them differently from what I do ; to conceive, for instance, that what we perceive to be round, may by Him be known as square ; that what we reckon as five, may be by Him accounted three ; or that the relations of magnitude which we perceive among them, may seem to Him the reverse of what they appear to us. The question, Why may not a circle be a square ? is clearly nonsense : but that which inquires why that which we know to be a globe may not be really a cube, is in fact equally so.

It has been before said, that we *know* only *truths*—and truths relate properly to propositions alone, and consist in the agreement and disagreement of the notions of which they consist. Now every negation which you make of a proposition,

must itself be expressible as one; otherwise it is neither true nor false, but merely insignificant. We may propose this then as one test of the certainty of our knowledge of any truth—that the opposite proposition cannot be stated without contradicting the meaning of the very terms employed, and consequently excluding itself from argument as nonsensical. And thus to ask, How do I *know* what I know? is absurd, as the simple statement of the contrary proposition will at once shew us. It is absurd, moreover, because if the words *know* be here used in the same meaning, it supposes that our knowledge may be at the same time an *act* and an *object* of the mind; and is exactly tantamount to the question, How do you *see* that you see a thing; or *remember* that you remember an event? The difficulty, finally, is an absurd one, from the very nature of it, for it never can be satisfied; since were it even possible that we could give a *reason* for our intuitive conclusions, that reason would still be open to the same question, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Truth and knowledge are reciprocal, each involving each. We know only truths—and truth itself is merely that which is or can be known. When we speak of truths not known, or of eternal and necessary truths, our language has a reference

to our conception of the operations of that eternal Mind, to which, from the beginning, all possible relations of all possible existences, have been necessarily and intuitively manifested.

IV.

§ 1. TRUTHS, we have seen, Dr. Reid divides into two classes : “ They are either necessary and immutable, whose contrary is impossible ; or they are contingent and mutable, depending some effect of will and power which had a beginning and may have an end.”

We have already thought it useful to remark, that the contingency here spoken of does not so properly affect the truth itself, as those existences which form the subject of it ; and the enumeration which Dr. Reid proceeds to make, of what he considers First Principles of contingent Truths, will, we think, in some degree, illustrate the use of keeping this distinction in mind.

The First Principle of this kind, which he alleges, is “ the existence of every thing of which we are conscious.” It is plain this can no otherwise be called a *contingent* truth, than as my existence, to which it refers, is contingent on the will of my Maker. But the proposition itself, that the thoughts of which I am conscious do at this

moment exist, is as *necessarily* certain, as that the whole is greater than its part ; the certainty of either proposition being equally involved in the very meaning of the terms used, which, in fact, are little other than identical ; and, it may be added, being true now, it must be eternally so ; it being beyond the power of omnipotence itself to make it otherwise.

Dr. Reid remarks, that our conviction of the existence of those passions and operations of our minds, of which we are conscious, is not the effect of reasoning.—He can find no proof of it ; and he takes it, therefore, to be a first principle of common sense, which nature requires us to believe on her authority. He adds, that he cannot reconcile this knowledge with Locke's theory, that all knowledge consists in perceiving the agreement or disagreement of our ideas. "What," he asks, "are the ideas, from whose comparison the knowledge of our own thoughts results ? or what are the agreements and disagreements which convince a man that he is in pain when he feels it ?"

Had the distinction which has been suggested, of the essential difference between consciousness and knowledge, occurred to Dr. Reid, he would hardly have put this question. Indeed, the question itself might have led him to perceive the dis-

tion. To speak of a man's *convincing* himself that he is in pain, is, at any rate, an unusual application of the word.

Consciousness, we repeat, is not knowledge. It is, indeed, supposed in the exercise of all knowledge; it is often the object or ground of it. But they differ specifically. The consciousness, or more properly, the *sense* of a pain is, in reality, the same thing with the pain itself. The pain only exists as far as we are sensible of it, nor can we conceive of it as existing unperceived. In this way, I do not know that consciousness differs from sensation *. So likewise, the consciousness of a thought is identical with the existence of the thought itself.

§ 2. It is plain from hence, how it is that consciousness is said never to deceive;—a truth, which Reid observes, has been admitted by the greatest sceptics;—because the things we are conscious of, existing only so far as we are so conscious, that very consciousness implies the truth,

* Consciousness, I think, has been defined or termed *internal sensation*; as such its proper application is to the operation of our minds,—as that of sensation or feeling is to the information of our organs. Consciousness, therefore, is no otherwise a kind of knowledge, than *feeling* is such.

inasmuch as it constitutes the fact of their existence.

And yet Dr. Reid remarks, "that no philosopher has attempted, by any hypothesis, to account for this consciousness of our own thoughts, and the certain knowledge of those real existences which accompany it."

What is the meaning of *accounting by an hypothesis for the consciousness of our thoughts*, I do not exactly see. With respect to "the certain knowledge of their real existence, which accompanies it," it is, I think, easily explicable, and exactly in accordance with Mr. Locke's theory of the origin of knowledge of every kind. The subjects of knowledge are *propositions*. That in the present case is, "that the thoughts I am conscious of really exist;" and the truth of this I know, by the simple perception of the agreement of the *ideas*,—that is, of the *meanings of the words*—"consciousness" and "existence." And this truth I know as *necessarily* as any mathematical axiom,—the contrary of it being obviously impossible.

§ 3. Consciousness is common to all animated beings, being apparently that in which our life essentially consists. For it seems involved in volition, and therefore supposed in that power of

originating motion, which some have defined to be the distinctive character of life, and we can conceive of it as existing unaccompanied by any such power.

Knowledge is probably peculiar to man, being properly the act of reason alone.

It has been already observed, that existence is the object of knowledge only, and that, though we are said to *know* our own existence, we are not properly *conscious* of it.

§ 4. Dr. Reid's IInd First Principle is, "that the thoughts of which I am conscious are the thoughts of a being which I call myself,—my mind, my person."

I confess I do not exactly understand this proposition, or what is the doctrine which it intends to exclude. It seems, at first sight, to amount merely to the affirmation that *my thoughts are the thoughts of me*. "If a man," says Dr. Reid, with characteristic simplicity, "asks a proof of this, I confess I can give none; there is an evidence in the proposition itself which I am unable to resist." He might have added, that there is an absurdity in the *contradictory* proposition, which it baffles human language to express.

Mr. Hume, it seems, had objected to the doc-

trine, that beside the thoughts we are conscious of, there is a mind the subject of these thoughts. The word *mind*, he says, signifies merely “that succession of related ideas and impressions, of which we have an intimate memory and consciousness.” It does not seem to follow from this statement, that in denying our ideas to belong to our minds, he meant to deny that they belong *to us* ; in which case, the dispute is merely verbal, for all that any one means by mind, is that part of his constitution by which he has ideas and impressions. Beyond this, the only intelligible meaning we can suppose Hume to have had, was to deny his own existence.

§ 5. “Another First Principle,” says Dr. Reid, “I take to be, that those things did really happen which I distinctly remember. This,” he adds, “has one of the surest marks of a first principle, for no man ever pretended to prove it, and yet no man in his wits ever calls it in question.”

No necessary connexion, he observes, can be shewn between that act of the mind which we call memory, and the past existence of the event remembered : adding, that all the arguments which, upon the ideal theory, have been adduced to question the authority of our senses, are equally avail-

able against that of memory, though he is not aware that Mr. Hume, or any other sceptic, has directly called it in question.

The difficulty in question may be stated in two ways; either, as Dr. Reid has done it above,—that those things did really happen which we distinctly remember; in which case, the certainty of memory is merely a case of the certainty of knowledge by perception, since what we cannot know *to be*, even when we perceive it, we cannot of course know *to have been* from subsequent recollection of these perceptions; or it may refer to the fact of the perceptions themselves, as ascertained only by memory.

§ 6. This last case seems to comprise the real point at issue; and the solution of any difficulty which may attend it I suspect is to be found in a somewhat different view of the principles of our knowledge, than has yet been set forth.

At present we shall merely remark, that there seems reason to question the ground on which memory has been commonly considered as an original faculty of the mind, distinct from every other, and operating upon principles peculiar to itself. The mind knows things past, exactly as it knows things not past, or as it knows things pos-

sible, or probable. When an idea is presented to it, we at once perceive whether it be new to us, or whether it be familiar ; and the act of the mind, in either case, seems to be precisely of the same kind ; yet surely, it is not by any peculiar faculty of the mind, as distinguished from that exercised in perception in general, that we recognize an idea as *new* ; though even in this case, it would not be improper to say, that we do not remember to have had it before.

If the phenomena of memory are fairly explicable by the ordinary operation of the understanding, we are surely not justified in seeking an explanation of them in the supposition of some peculiar or original faculty of the mind. But to any notion which we can form of the understanding, a power of knowing of the ideas of which it conceives, whether or not it has had them before, seems absolutely essential. And if this be the case, knowledge by memory is like knowledge of any other kind ; and it is equally absurd to question the certainty of either.

But are we not constantly mistaken in our memory ? Not more so than in the exercise of knowledge of other kinds. In both cases there may be a defect,—an obscurity,—a confusion of perception. But we cannot remember what did

not happen, any more than we can know what is false.

Recollection, I conceive, depends solely on the association of ideas, and bears much the same relation to memory that reasoning does to reason.

§ 7. Dr. Reid's IVth First Principle is our own personal identity and continued existence, as far back as we remember any thing distinctly. "This," he says, "we know immediately, and not by reasoning. It seems a part of the testimony of memory. There cannot be a more palpable absurdity than that a man should remember what happened before he existed." But if so, is it not clear that the truth in question, according to Dr. Reid's own distinction, is not a contingent, but a necessary one? It is only a particular case of that more general proposition, the denial of which, Dr. Reid here observes, involves a palpable absurdity. That a whole orange is bigger than the half of it, is surely as *necessary* a truth, as the general axiom itself which it involves.

With respect to our personal identity, I have before observed, that we know it necessarily, precisely in the manner in which Locke observes all our knowledge takes place; only in this case, it

is not the *agreement* so much as the *identity* of its ideas which it perceives. As the mind necessarily sees that twice two equal four, or rather that $2=2$, so it perceives, that I am the same person to day that I was yesterday ; since it merely affirms, that I,—am I. That I was, or existed yesterday at all, is a different question, (though involving the other, which, in its turn, supposes this,) for which I have the testimony of memory alone.

§ 8. The Vth First Principle is, that those things do really exist which we perceive by our senses, and are what we perceive them to be.

Dr. Reid offers no proof of this beyond a reference to the implicit faith which all men give to the distinct testimony of their senses. With respect to the arguments which Berkeley and Hume have brought against the doctrine, he observes, they are wholly founded on the ideal theory, that it is *ideas* in our minds, and not the objects themselves, that we perceive immediately. But this, he says, is a mere hypothesis of philosophers ; the vulgar never suppose that it is any thing else but the things themselves which they perceive : and if they do perceive things immediately, they have the

same reason to believe their existence as philosophers have to believe the existence of the ideas themselves.

§ 9. Dr. Reid has nowhere very precisely stated what it is he understands by saying we perceive immediately the object itself. His whole doctrine of perception is founded upon the fact that the impressions which we have of bodies in sensation, have no conceivable resemblance with those essential properties of matter, the existence of which, by the constitution of our nature, these sensations suggest to us: and surely it must follow from this remark, or rather it is the object of it to shew, that our knowledge of external bodies is *not* immediate, but communicated through the intervention of a system of *signs*, of which we can give no other account than the arbitrary appointment of our Maker.

“When I grasp an ivory ball in my hand,” says Dr. Reid elsewhere, “I feel a certain sensation of touch. In the sensation there is nothing external, nothing corporeal. The sensation is neither round nor hard; it is an act and feeling of the mind, from which I cannot, by reasoning, infer the existence of any body. But by the constitution of my nature, the sensation carries along with it the

conception and belief of a round hard body existing in my hand."

We cannot see how, in this process, the mind can be said to perceive the object more *immediately* than it did in that supposed by the ideal theory. The partizans of this last contended, that what was immediately present to the mind was not the external object, but the image, or representative idea of it, as conveyed in sensation. Berkeley observing that no quality of body could perfectly resemble or be represented by any sensation of mind, insisted that the existence of matter, according to any ordinary conception of it, was on this ground not only unproved, but impossible. This difficulty Dr. Reid completely removed by shewing, that our conception of matter, as obtained through sensation, does in fact pretend to no sort of resemblance to the sensation itself. Its existence, independent of perception, therefore, became once more conceivable; but the fact of that existence is plainly no more ascertained by this view of the question, than it was by that involved in the ideal theory. All that the mind is conscious of, in either case, are so many affections of itself, call them either ideas or sensations; and these suggest the notion of certain qualities of the object residing without. But Dr. Reid expressly admits that

we cannot make this inference by *reasoning*, and he refers it to the instinctive impulse of our nature ; which, as no one ever questioned the *fact* of our belief, is clearly to leave the *grounds* of it (the only possible object of scepticism) as much open to difficulty as ever.

The solution of the whole difficulty, and of almost every other connected with the subject, I apprehend will be found in the truth, that it is by *reason*, and reason only, that we infer from sensation the properties of body, our ideas of such being properly nothing less than *conclusions* of the understanding *.

§ 10. Dr. Reid's VIth First Principle is, that we have some degree of power over our actions, and the determinations of our will.

Dr. Reid admits to Mr. Hume, that it is not easy to say how we first get the notion or idea of power. "It is neither," he says, "an object of sense nor consciousness. We see events succeeding one another, but we see not the power by which they are produced. We are conscious of the operations of our minds—but power is not an operation of mind : if we had no notions but such

* See Appendix, Note D.

as are furnished by external sense or by consciousness, it seems to be impossible that we should ever have any conception of power."

§ 11. Power is indeed not an operation of the mind, but it is essentially involved in every such operation, so that I cannot understand how we can be said to be conscious of the one without being equally so of the other. What is meant by our being conscious of an operation of the mind—of memory—or reasoning, for instance? It is simply that we are conscious that we remember—that we reason. But in so doing, are we not equally conscious in ourselves of a *power* of reasoning or remembering? The use of the word *power* is merely as a more general mode of expressing a fact of which we are conscious. If I *do* think, it surely follows that I *can* think, and this substitution of the *potential* for the *indicative*, seems all that is implied in the attribution of *power*.

The whole of Hume's difficulty on this subject turns upon a sophism of precisely the same nature as that by which he and other sceptics have questioned the certainty of our *knowledge*. Action implies power, as much as knowledge implies certainty. The only question is, do we know, or do we act? To ask *how* we act, or whence we know,

is equivalent to the question, by what knowledge do you know, or by what power do you act,—i. e. exercise power?—which is plainly without meaning.

Power is a simple idea, and as such, like every other, is the creature of the mind, and of our reflection on its operations and sensations. We are not, therefore, conscious of *power*, any more than we are of reason, or memory, or even of our existence. These ideas are all the objects of our *knowledge*, as resulting from the consciousness of those impressions or operations in which they are involved. We are conscious of remembering, and thence we know that we have the power of memory. Our notion of *power*, taken by itself, abstracted from all exercise of it, is as impossible as that of reason. And, on the same grounds, because any conception which we attempt to form of either, must, itself, necessarily involve the exercise of both. They seem to be the ultimate elements (so to speak) of the human mind,—if *reason is our being*, as understanding creatures, power is our being, as active ones.

We may add, that it is only in *mind*, as its ultimate source, that we can understand power to reside. The phenomenon of *force* implies action in its original source; for an infinite communication

of forces seems absurd. And *action*, I think, is conceivable only in *mind*, for without a *reason* for its operation in one manner, or direction, or degree, rather than another, it is not intelligible how it could ever have taken place at all.

§ 12. What has been said refers only to Dr. Reid's unqualified admission of the accuracy of Hume's statement of the obscurity which is described as hanging over the origin of our idea of power at all.

With respect to the particular principle, "that we have some degree of power over the actions of our bodies, and the determination of our wills," it would seem to involve a question of fact, rather than a "First Principle of Truth." If Mr. Hume, or any other person, chose to deny that he had such a power, it could not affect the persuasion of another man, whose experience (the only criterion of matter of fact) assured him that he had. I rather apprehend, that Dr. Reid meant to affirm in his "First Principle," that we are conscious of this degree of power over our actions and volitions, previous to, and independent of its exercise. For, as he observes, a consciousness of the power to do any act is implied in volition, and yet volition itself supposes a conviction of power to do the

action willed. For, as Locke says, however we may desire, we never will to do an act which is beyond our power.

There is certainly a great difficulty in this point ; particularly as respects the exercise of those volitions, which seem as necessary to the first use of our limbs and organs, as to any subsequent employment of them. If in any part of our mental constitution I could admit the operation of an *instinctive* determination of the mind, it would be in this instance ; and, perhaps, a recurrence to such an interference here might be justified by the apparent necessity of the case. For if the will had to wait for the experience, which itself supposes the previous operation of the will, it should seem that action could never have taken place at all.

§ 13. "Another First Principle is, that the natural faculties by which we distinguish truth from falsehood, are not fallacious." Dr. Reid remarks, what is obvious, that proof of this is impossible, since even a mathematical demonstration of it, if it could be offered, would still suppose, in the apprehension of it, the exercise of this very faculty, the truth of which is the very point to be proved.

He adds, too, that this is a truth which seems

prior to every other; for in every instance of assent, whether upon intuitive, demonstrative, or probable evidence, the truth of our faculties is taken for granted, and is, as it were, one of the premises upon which our assent is grounded.

What Dr. Reid meant to say here is obvious, and is true; otherwise, to speak of the truth of our faculties, as being one of the *premises* upon which our assent (which of course supposes the exercise of those faculties) to any other truth is *grounded*, betrays no very precise notion of the nature or process of assent at all.

§ 14. For the rest, the best answer to the difficulty is to ask the sceptic who makes it, what he means by the terms truth, and falsehood, and fallacy, which are employed in the question. Truth and falsehood, we have seen, are terms that concern only propositions; and all that we mean when we say a proposition is true, is that the mind distinctly sees that it cannot be otherwise. Of a proposition, therefore, which I see to be true, to call upon me to admit that it may be false, is to bid me affirm that I see a thing *may* be otherwise than I see it *must* be; which is a palpable contradiction. If it be said that it is still possible that to another and superior intelligence the relations of

things (of the squares on the sides of a rectangular triangle, for instance) may appear differently than they do to us, I must deny it. In affirming a thing to be possible, it is meant that we can conceive and understand it to be so*. *Possible* existence, as distinguished from that of which we have had experience, is merely *conceivable* existence; now that the relation in question can be otherwise than I see it to be, is not conceivable, otherwise I should not know it to be *true*. I can conceive of intelligences *not* knowing that relation, but to speak of them as knowing it otherwise than I know it, if we reflect a little on the import of the words truth and knowledge, we shall see to be absurd.

If it be said, how do we know that what seems absurd and contradictory to our intelligence must necessarily appear so to an higher? the answer is, that as our only conception of intelligence at all is derived from our consciousness of the very operations of mind which are here in question, to suppose that other beings can have perceptions of truth differing from those which we have, is, in fact, in any proper meaning of the word, to sup-

* It may be observed, that the expression that a thing may be possible, is hardly proper. The terms, may be, and possible, are equivalent. A thing is possible—or may be true.

pose them *not intelligent*. Such beings may have faculties of a much higher nature than our own—but differing thus essentially from any which we possess, we can no more speculate on their perceptions than we can on sensations of colour or taste which may belong to an animal endowed with organs specifically different from our own. We may add, that the objects of our knowledge being nothing but our own ideas, it is not conceivable that the divine mind itself can attain to a higher degree of certainty than that which, within a limited range, he has allotted to the mental intuitions of that portion of his creatures, whom, probably, on the very ground of this participation of the rational faculty, he has himself declared to be created in his own image. The mind's ideas are wholly within itself;—they are its own creation; it must know them perfectly, because it is only as known by it that they exist at all; and in the same way, the relations which the mind perceives exist necessarily, inasmuch as their existence and the perceptions of them are one and the same thing.

§ 15. Dr. Reid's VIIIth First Principle is, “that there is life and intelligence in our fellow-men with whom we converse.” He does not mention what philosopher has ever maintained the

contrary proposition ; and yet, unless he had been provoked by some such sceptical *mauvais plaisant*, it is difficult to understand how he could have been induced to insert among the articles of his philosophic creed the dogma that the men we converse with are *alive* and *intelligent*.

Dr. Reid, however, contrives to find more difficulty in the case than may at first appear. That a child evinces this conviction before it is a year old, is certain ; and he asks, How does it attain it ? Not by reasoning surely—for children do not reason at that age. Nor is it by the external senses—for life and intelligence are not the objects of the external senses. He seems disposed, therefore, to ascribe it to an instinctive impulse of our nature.

What is an infant's notion of "life and intelligence" in the abstract, it is not easy to say. In fact, an older philosopher would be puzzled to give a precise definition of them. But we may be sure that a child has no general notions of the sort. What it does, and what, from the first exercise of its perception, it must necessarily be able to do, is to distinguish of the beings which are around it, those which are living and intelligent from those which are not so. It is strange that Reid should say that it could not do this by the exercise of the

senses. How otherwise would Reid himself have distinguished an animal that was alive from one which was not? The *principles* of life and intelligence, indeed, are not the objects of the external senses—but the manifestations of such are clearly so; and it is with these alone that a child can be supposed to trouble itself.

As far as a child at that age *has* any general notion of life and intelligence, I suspect its tendency is to ascribe them to every thing; and that it is by the effect of maturer observation that it comes to limit them to particular subjects. In the first instance, a child probably and naturally judges of every other existence by the consciousness of its own. That they believe every thing to have *feeling* seems plain, from the satisfaction wherewith they witness the *punishment* of the delinquent chair or table, which had become obnoxious to their little heads.

§ 16. “Another First Principle,” says Reid, “I take to be, that certain features of the countenance, sounds of the voice, and gestures of the body, indicate certain thoughts and dispositions of mind,”—a principle which would seem to belong to the class of physiological, rather than metaphysical truths.

That we naturally express certain thoughts and dispositions of mind, by certain features, tones, and gestures, is undoubted. But Reid contends that it is by a similar instinct, and previous to all reasoning or experience, that we *interpret* these indications in others. Children just born, he remarks, may be frightened and thrown into fits by an angry tone or threatening look. But from this it only follows, that there are certain tones, looks, and gestures which are naturally disagreeable and alarming to children; which is as conceivable, as that there should be certain tastes and sounds which naturally disgust them. But how are we to account for their interpreting these tones and gestures, as indicating thoughts and dispositions of mind, of which they have as yet had no experience? A child just born cannot possibly have any sense of the meaning of menace and anger; nor can it therefore interpret any expression of voice or countenance as the sign of such a passion or purpose. Any sharp sudden noise, I apprehend, will frighten an infant; and so will any unusual or unexpected appearance.

“But,” says Reid, “it is impossible this conviction can be learned from experience. How shall experience instruct us, when we see the sign only, and when the thing signified is invisible? The

thoughts and passions of the mind are invisible, and therefore their connexion with any sensible sign cannot first be discovered by experience ;—there must be some earlier source of this knowledge.”

In the same way might we not urge, that it is only by a similar *instinct* that the physician can interpret certain external symptoms as indications of a fever or a pleurisy. He cannot, we might say, *see* the fever or pleurisy, and therefore their connection with any sensible sign cannot first be discovered by experience. It is plain that, independently of our own experience of such passions, all that we should mean by anger or by fever, would be the designation of that supposed disorder, whether of the mind or body, which produces the external phenomena in question.

At any rate, it seems certain, that a being who had never felt a particular passion, could by no possible external signification attain the notion of it as existing in another, any more than from any description he could form a notion of a colour differing altogether from any he had ever seen. No language of countenance is more proverbially eloquent than that which expresses the sexual passions ; and yet, to children under puberty, it is altogether unintelligible.

§ 17. This doctrine of Dr. Reid's, respecting our *instinctive interpretation* of signs, is the more deserving of attention, since it is by the same principle alone that he explains the whole process of perception. For he contends, that, as by the constitution of our nature the visible phenomena of countenance bring along with them the conception and belief of a certain passion in the mind of the person ; so, by a natural language of a similar kind, certain impressions on our senses suggest certain conceptions of matter or body.

A little consideration, I think, will shew, that the two cases do not at all illustrate each other, and that there is an important difference between them. Whether or not we have had any experience of the connexion between the sign and the thing signified, it is certain that, in the case of the passion, we must have had some previous knowledge and experience of the passion itself, before we can interpret the sign as an indication of it. But in the instance of perception, the ideas of hardness, extension, external existence, which are suggested by the sensation, are such as we neither had, nor could have had any notion of previous to its occurrence ; and it is clearly an abuse of the word to speak of sensations as the *signs* by which they are made known to us. *Lan-*

guage can remind us of notions which we have already had, but in any consistency with the ordinary meaning of the word, it cannot possibly be said to convey to us *new* ones. What Dr. Reid calls natural language, is rather a sort of *super-natural revelation* of notions, of which, it seems, that neither our sense nor reason could otherwise have given us any conception. And accordingly we find that Mallebranche, in considering the same difficulty, was actually driven to resort to this method of explanation.

The analogy, therefore, by which alone Dr. Reid supports his doctrine of arbitrary suggestion, wholly fails him. That, in the interpretation of signs, we must have a previous knowledge of the thing signified, is absolutely indispensable. It should seem equally so, that we should have some understanding of the connexion of the thing with its symbol. But where the connexion is *natural*, and the language moreover is one which we are all by nature taught to speak, this experience is quickly acquired. The instinctive operation of sympathy alone goes far to instruct us in its meaning. We cannot witness any marked or unusual expression of countenance or gesture in another, without an involuntary disposition to imitate it; and so natural is the connexion between the ex-

pression and the passion, that I think it has been observed that we cannot even *counterfeit* the one, without feeling something of the other. A man too has a certain degree of consciousness, that his mental agitation produces in himself these external symptoms of its presence.

§ 18. Dr. Reid's tenth First Principle is, "that there is a certain regard due to human testimony in matters of fact, and even to human authority, in matters of religion."

Perhaps Dr. Reid would have more precisely described this principle, as being that by which we assume "that men will always tell truth when they have no motive to do otherwise;" a principle that seems as certain, as that a body, when once in motion, will continue to move in the direction of its original impulse, until affected by some opposing or disturbing force.

In his chapter upon Instinct, he refers again to this fact, as an instance of the possibility of *instinctive* belief or judgment. "It is commonly," he says, "taken for granted, that it is always evidence, real or apparent, that determines our belief; but the fact is, that before we grow up to the full use of our rational faculties, we do believe,

and must believe many things without any evidence at all."

I have the same difficulty in this, as in the last case ; Dr. Reid's solution contradicts my notion of the very terms employed in it. That the mind should be *determined* to a particular belief without evidence, good or bad, real or apparent, seems as impossible, as that it should acquire, by the *interpretation of signs*, notions, of which it had never before been in possession. In fact, an *instinctive belief* sounds to me as palpable a contradiction in terms as would an *instinctive conclusion*. For belief and conclusion are both and equally acts of that reason or judgment, the operation of which we intend to exclude by the application of the term instinct.

§ 19. " But," says Reid, " our reliance upon testimony must be instinctive, for we see it most strongly in children." It is important to observe, that it is only after they *understand language*, that this disposition in them is developed. Indeed, it is not until then that they can properly be said to receive testimony at all. Now the process of learning language seems to me a discipline in the highest degree calculated to beget a reli-

ance on any information, of which language is the vehicle; and such as may be found, on consideration, perfectly sufficient to account for that peculiar propensity to connect the reality of the thing signified with the sign, which, I think, constitutes the whole ground of the disposition in question. In fact, the very notion and use of language assumes the necessity of its correct application to facts and objects. Where no motive of deceit intervenes, to speak of things as otherwise than they are, involves the same absurdity as would the use of terms which we know to be unintelligible. To a child, who has as yet no idea of deceit, a *lie* must create much the same confusion of ideas as would the misapplication of a term which is familiar to him. To such a being, as yet wholly unconscious of the motives which operate to pervert the truth in the world, I cannot conceive how, consistently with his notion of the import or purpose of language, it can at all occur to qualify his acquiescence in the testimony of those from whom he has learnt that language, and to whose authority on such a point he naturally implicitly defers. Such a mistrust or difficulty, if it did arise, must, as I have said, refer wholly to his apprehension of the meaning of the words or phrases employed.

“ But,” says Reid, “ it is not the *words* of the testifier, but his *belief*, that produces this belief in a child. For children soon learn to distinguish what is said in jest, from what is said in earnest. When the signs of belief in the speaker are ambiguous, it is pleasant to observe with what sagacity they will pry into his countenance, to discern whether he really believes what he says, or only counterfeits belief. As soon as this point is determined, their belief is regulated by his. If he be doubtful, they are doubtful ; if he be assured, they are assured.”

It is strange that Reid should not have observed, that this, so far from being an instance of our early, and therefore instinctive belief of testimony, on the contrary, is rather one of our *disbelief* of it, as soon as ever we perceive a *reason* to do so. For this distrust in the sincerity of the speaker, is certainly in no degree a part of the supposed instinct, but is the direct fruit of the child's experience of deceit, either in itself or others ; and previous to such experience it could not possibly take place, consistently with any notion he can have of the use or purport of language.

What then is the difficulty ? that a child, who every moment is made to feel his own physical

and intellectual imbecility, and his consequent dependence on the superior wisdom, strength, and skill of his elders, should be disposed to adopt as true those conclusions of judgment which he sees they have arrived at, upon subjects on which he has no means of deciding for himself. Is this any thing more than the necessary dictate of reason, such as it may be supposed to operate even upon so imperfect understandings ? or, in order to account for it, must we suppose a suspension of that faculty, and go out of our way in search of a principle so anomalous, and, as I think, so self-contradictory, as that of a blind instinctive belief ?

That the process in the child's mind is, in truth, a rational one, may be inferred from the fact, that he does limit his belief according to his notion of the comparative authority and means of knowledge of the speaker. He pays, perhaps, but little attention to the information of a contemporary ; that of an older boy comes with more weight ; and in all cases we shall find the testimony of the nurse overborne by that of the mother, while even this last is, perhaps, made to give way to the more imposing sanctions of papa.

§ 20. The XIth First Principle is " that there

are many events depending upon the will of man, in which there is a self-evident probability, greater or less, according to circumstances." He means, as appears from the context, that there is such a regularity and consistency in the operation of men's motives, as that we can depend, with a great degree of probability, upon their influencing their conduct under given circumstances.

This, too, seems to me rather oddly arranged under the head of 'First principles of contingent truths.' Such a classification of the fact has not, at any rate, the same presumption in its favour, as he had observed to belong to the last-mentioned one,—viz. that it is most strongly developed in us at an age when our reason is supposed to be the least operative. On the contrary, I think it is as we grow older, that we place the greater reliance upon the uniform influence of certain motives. Whether a child speculates at all upon such influence I am not sure, but certainly he is less surprised or shocked at the exception than persons of more experience.

Did Reid mean to assume that no *reason* can be assigned why we should expect men to act alike with the same motives, and under the same circumstances? and that even it is not the experience, whether of our own consciousness or of

other men's conduct, that leads us to this conclusion, but a certain instinctive propensity to expect it, similar to that which he supposes dictates our reliance upon human testimony? One would think that, as in Newton's first law of motion, the mere absence of any motive to act otherwise would be a sufficient ground of such expectation. Not to say that to affirm of the same man, that from the same motive he can act differently, involves a contradiction of our notion of the operation of motives at all.

§ 21. Perhaps, as he understood it, this XIth Principle is only a case of the XIIth and last principle of contingent truth,—which is, that “in the phenomena of nature, what is to be, will probably be like to what has been under similar circumstances.”

It cannot be, he observes, *experience* which gives us this persuasion, for all experience (meaning, I apprehend, all reasoning from experience) is grounded upon a belief that the future will be like the past. He adds, it is remarkable that though all our expectation of what is to happen in the course of nature is derived from the belief of this principle, yet no man, before Mr. Hume, ever thought of questioning the ground of this be-

lief; which he admits that “that philosopher has shewn clearly and invincibly, to be grounded neither upon reasoning nor intuitive evidence;” it is not therefore, he says, a *necessary* truth.

§ 22. Mr. Hume’s doctrine on this subject is to be found in the IVth Section of his Inquiry concerning human understanding. And as Dr. Reid has thus explicitly admitted the conclusiveness of his reasoning upon it, it may be worth while to consider it more particularly. In the first part of that section, he contents himself with shewing that all our reasonings concerning matter of fact, and real existence, are founded merely in the relation of cause to effect: and again, that the foundation of all our reasonings and conclusions concerning that relation, in particular instances, rests wholly upon experience. So far I am not aware that there was any thing new in Mr. Hume’s doctrine. But he goes on to ask, in the 2nd part, what is the foundation of all our conclusions from *experience* itself?

If a body of like colour and consistency with that bread which we have formerly eaten, be presented to us, we make no scruple of repeating the experiment, and foresee with certainty, like nourishment and support. ‘Now this,’ says Mr. Hume,

‘is a process of the mind or thought, of which I would willingly know the foundation. It is admitted on all hands, that there is no known connexion between the sensible qualities and secret powers; and as to past experience, it can be admitted to give direct and certain information of those precise objects only, and that precise period of time which fell under its cognizance.’

Mr. Hume proceeds to shew, that the consequence cannot be inferred by demonstrative reasoning, since it implies no *contradiction*, that the course of nature may change, or that an object, seemingly like those we have experienced, may be attended with different or contrary effects. Still less can it be derived as *probable* from our past experience, since the grounds of inference from past experience to the future, is, in fact, the very point in question.

His own solution of the difficulty is given in the following Section, in which he ascribes the phenomenon in question to the effect of *custom* or *habit*. ‘Whenever,’ says he, ‘the repetition of any particular act or operation produces a propensity to renew the said act or operation, without being impelled by any reasoning or process of the understanding, we always say that this propensity is the effect of custom.’ Accordingly, he after-

wards adds, 'it is certain we advance here a very intelligible proposition, if not a true one, when we assert, that after the constant conjunction of two objects, heat and flame, for instance, weight and solidity, we are determined by custom alone, to expect from the one the appearance of the other *.'

§ 23. It is singular that Mr. Hume should not have observed the very palpable inconsistency of his doctrine here. Custom, according to his own definition, may beget a propensity to *renew* any act which we have often repeated, without being impelled by any process of the understanding, but this very statement supposes, that it was such a process of the understanding, and not

* Pascal, in one of his "Thoughts," has remarkably anticipated the expression of this doctrine of Mr. Hume's: "La coutume fait nos preuves les plus fortes. Elle incline les sens, qui entraînent l'esprit, sans qu'elle y pense. Qui a démontré qu'il sera demain jour et que nous mourrons, et qu'y-a-t-il de plus universellement cru? C'est donc la coutume qui nous en persuade."—*Pensées*, p. 63. A remarkable coincidence of doctrine between the most religious and most sceptical of modern philosophers. But in fact, in philosophy, Pascal was hardly less sceptical than Hume himself; and it was upon the uncertainty of all human grounds of knowledge, that he built the necessity of resorting to those of another and higher kind.

custom which originally suggested the act itself*. Mr Hume, in fact, has strangely confounded the repetition of the mere passive perception of the two objects as conjoined, with the act of the mind which, upon the perception of that repetition, connects them as cause and effect.

It is true, Mr. Hume's proposition here may, in one sense, be said to be (as he says) *intelligible*; because *being determined by custom*, may bear the sense of being determined by the *observation of customary conjunction*. But thus understood, it plainly would not serve Mr. Hume's purpose, which is to explain how it is that this observation of customary or constant conjunction hitherto, should lead the mind to expect its continuance in future. But if Mr. Hume meant, as obviously he must, to state that it is *custom* that leads the mind to expect the continuance of the *customary* connexion of phenomena, I must say, that his proposition is the very reverse of intelligible. At any rate, it is certainly not true. The case may be one in which we have never made the inference before. Suppose the concomitancy in question to

* This remark has been made by the Author of the Quarterly Review of Mr. Stewart's second volume.—See Quarterly Review, Vol. XII. p. 311.

be stated as a fact observed by others ; we immediately expect its renewal, as much as if we had observed it ourselves ; and it would be an odd perversion of language, to account by *custom* for an act of the mind we had never before exercised.

It is, perhaps, hardly worth while dwelling at this length upon an hypothesis, thus obviously absurd ; though I must remark that Hume assumes, as a decisive presumption in favour of his doctrine, that it is the only one which explains the difficulty why we draw from a thousand instances an inference, which we are not able to draw from one instance that is in no respect different from them. ‘ Reason,’ he observes, ‘ is incapable of any such variation.’

The fact, however, as applied to our inferences of cause and effect, is not true. The repetition of an instance, *in no respect different*, would not increase our belief ; and, consequently, in experiments so simple, that there is no danger of mistaking one operating cause for another, our belief is as perfect after one trial as a thousand *.

* The case of natural phenomena, where no particular operating cause is known, such as the phases of the moon, or the return of the seasons, is somewhat different. Here a longer experience is necessary to determine, not so much the *certainty* of our expectation, as the *object* of it.

In fact, Mr. Hume has admitted this, in observing that when a child has felt the sensation of pain, from touching the flame of a candle, he will be careful not to put his hand near any candle, but will expect a similar effect from a cause which is similar in its sensible qualities and appearance *.

And he adds, "If you assert that the understanding of the child is led into this conclusion, by any process of argument or ratiocination, I may justly require you to produce that argument. You cannot say that it is abstruse, and may probably escape your enquiry, since you confess it is obvious to the capacity of a mere infant."

§ 24. The very simplicity of a process of the mind, however, may often give an air of abstruseness to the attempt to describe or explain it; just as it is only by a periphrasis that we can define a word so simple as not to admit of the substitution of another more so. In the present instance, nothing can be more simple than the act of the mind in question; yet, on that very account, there may be some difficulty in its analysis.

* Is it not plain, from this very instance, that it is not *custom* or *habit* that produces the belief in question?

I must first observe, that it seems to me not accurate to speak of the phenomenon in question, as a case of the relation of cause and effect. - The qualities or properties of any thing do not stand to it in the relation of effects, though it is often only by the effects of the thing or substance, that we know the existence of the qualities.

It is, in fact, little more than a case of *perception*. The first use which children make of their senses, is learning to distinguish things by their *properties*. It is in the observation of these that consists all that they know, and, indeed, all that we know, of objects. Every thing we perceive is to us a mere bundle of properties, (or, as Locke terms it, a collection of simple ideas;) none of which, however apparently arbitrary may be their connexion, can be changed, without changing that which to us forms the specific or distinguishing essence of the thing perceived.

In the case just mentioned, the child, after the experiment of its finger, knows that the object before it is not only bright and yellow, but hot and painful; and it necessarily forms to itself the notion of something possessing those properties; of which we may be sure that of the last is not the least vivid. If, therefore, when a candle is again presented to its sight, it believes it to be the same

thing, or the same kind of thing, which it had seen before, it must as necessarily believe it to be hot, as it sees it to be coloured or luminous ; and that it does assume the identity of the object, is supposed in the difficulty itself, as stated by Mr. Hume.

In truth, I know no other criterion which we have of the sameness of any two (successive) phenomena, than that it makes the same impression on us. Mankind, in general, have no other reason to suppose that the sun of to-day is the same with that of yesterday, than that it similarly affects their perceptions. This, at any rate, is the first and most obvious conclusion of the understanding, and the distinction which it afterwards comes to make of *similar* from *same*, is the result of wider experience, and of a maturer use of its own powers.

When the child again sees the candle, it has every reason to suppose it the same thing,—i. e. hot as well as bright and yellow,—and none to suppose it a different thing ; that is, something bright and yellow, and not hot. But of the co-existence of all these three qualities, it cannot, till it applies its hand, again be *certain* ; for there is no necessary connexion between them. Accord-

ingly, all that it, or, indeed, the oldest experimentalist can do, is to *suppose* or *believe* it.

Nor is there any more difficulty in the case, in which we come to consider of objects not as the same, but merely of the same sort. We know by experience, that things not numerically identical may possess similar qualities. It is this experience that leads us to class them in sorts and kinds ; and in considering one thing as of the same kind as another, it is upon the supposition of their possession of this common resemblance.

“ The bread,” says Mr. Hume, “ which I formerly ate, nourished me ; that is, a body of such sensible qualities was at that time endued with such secret powers. But does it follow that other bread must also nourish me at all other times ; or that like sensible qualities must always be attended with like secret powers ? This consequence,” he adds, “ seems no wise necessary.”

I apprehend no one ever considered it as such. That the substance I formerly ate combined certain secret with certain sensible qualities, I do not believe, but *know*. That the substance now before me, with the like appearances, possesses like properties, I do not know, but only *believe* ; and for this belief, it seems sufficient that I *know* that

there either is or may be a nutritious body, bearing these external characters, and that I do *not* know of the existence, either actual or possible, of an innutritious or deleterious one. In fact, had I experienced any such in a single instance, it would much affect the firmness of my belief; as every one experiences in the case of a medicine, (Epsom salts, for instance, and oxalic acid,) of which the external qualities are nearly undistinguishable from those of some other.

In a word; when of two objects presenting the same sensible qualities, we suppose the one to possess the same secret qualities with the other, we are merely presuming them to be either the same thing, or the same kind of thing. And for this presumption, we have a reason in the knowledge afforded us by our past experience; while it is clear we have, in that experience, no ground whatever for the contrary one. And the oftener we have acted upon this presumption, without being deceived, the more confidently shall we continue to do so. I am not sure, but custom and habit may have some share in this last disposition; though an adequate *reason* for it seems to be assignable in the fact, that the longer and more accurate is our experience of any effect, the more precise and comprehensive is our knowledge of the

nature and manner of operation of its cause; and supposing it to continue to operate, the better grounds have we for predicting in what way it will do so. Here too, as in all reasoning from experience, our conclusion is founded less upon any direct argument in favour of our particular expectation, than upon the absence of any that should suggest a contrary one.

The cause and sustaining support of all existence we know to be the will of an infinitely wise and powerful Being. Of the *reasons* which determined the Divine will to the production of the universe we know nothing, and consequently cannot be sure that they will continue to operate a moment beyond the present. All that we can *guess* on the subject is, that the longer it has lasted, the longer perhaps it is likely to last. The fact that it has suited the Divine wisdom that the world should last already six thousand years, affords so far a presumption that it may so suit the same Providence that it should endure another equal period. The presumption, indeed, is as weak as any can be to have any force at all; but in the total absence of any other, it may have weight.

It may be said, indeed, that if, as we must suppose, the duration of the world be limited, the

longer it has lasted, the less it has to last. But this is to confound the necessary fact of the inverse variation of the world's *future* duration with its *past*, with the presumption of the probable amount of its *total* duration, which we ground upon the simple fact, that as it has already lasted six thousand years, that may be thought to afford presumption that it may last another equal number of years, *rather than any other particular number* which you can adduce.

V.

§ 1. IN his following chapter, Dr. Reid next proceeds to consider of what he calls the *first Principles of necessary Truth*; under which, without much philosophy of distinction, he includes the laws of grammar, the rules of logic, the mathematical axioms, and even those determinations in tastes and morals, which appear to have been universal in all ages. The only definition he has given of a necessary truth is, that its contrary is impossible;—a description hardly applicable to much of the matters here enumerated, which, in fact, have formed the chief materials for philosophical disputation, from the earliest times to the present.

§ 2. The mathematical axioms themselves do not appear to afford a perfect exception to this remark—for even their certainty, it seems, has not escaped the all-searching scepticism of Mr. Hume. That philosopher, Dr. Reid tells us, laying down as a principle that every simple idea is a copy of a preceding impression, and observing that

no one ever saw or felt a perfectly straight line, for instance, contended that we could have no idea of such a line, and that therefore it was not true that two right lines can cut one another in one point only; and in the same way he urged that the ideas most essential to geometry, such as equality, a square surface, &c. are necessarily indistinct and indeterminate, and that consequently we can build no certain demonstration upon them.

Dr. Reid agrees with Mr. Hume, that if we could form no notion of points, lines, and surfaces, more accurate than those we see and handle, there could be no mathematical demonstration; but he insists "that every intelligent man, by analyzing, abstracting, and compounding the rude materials exhibited by his senses, can fabricate in his own mind those elegant and accurate forms of lines, surfaces, and solids."

Neither of these philosophers seem to have had very precise notions of what they were here talking about. Certainly they are not forms or figures, more or less accurate, the relations of which constitute the object of mathematical inquiry, but ideas, or we may say, *suppositions* of the mind, the essence of which consists in *definition*. In many cases the mind cannot pretend to frame to itself the figure in question—a polygon of a thou-

sand sides, for instance—with any approximation to accuracy ; though, from the description or definition, it can argue certainly as to all its properties. Moreover, it may be doubted whether, by any process of “analyzing, abstracting, or compounding,” Dr. Reid could have fabricated in his mind the form or image of a solid, at all more accurate or elegant than those supplied by his senses.

§ 3. The last class of First Principles of necessary truth, of which Dr. Reid makes mention, are the *metaphysical* ;—of these, he says, he shall particularly consider *three*, because they have been called in question by Mr. Hume.

The first is, “that the qualities we perceive by our senses, must have a subject which we call body, and that the thoughts we are conscious of, must have a subject which we call mind.”

This appears, as far at least as *body* is concerned, to be at bottom the same with the old question of the existence of a material world ; and with respect to *mind*, it is obviously nothing more than a general restatement of the axiom, “that the thoughts of which I am conscious, are the thoughts of a being I call myself,—my mind ;” both which, we have seen, Dr. Reid has arranged

under the head of *contingent* truths ; implicitly admitting, by such a classification, that the contrary of them is *not impossible*.

§ 4. The first of these propositions was, we know, denied by Berkeley, whose reasoning on the subject is sufficiently simple. He observed, that all that we know of body, is what is called its sensible qualities ; but these, he contended, exist only in the mind perceiving them, and cannot be conceived as existing unperceived. Of body, moreover, considered merely as the subject of these qualities, he shewed that we could form no consistent conception whatever ; the supposition of its existence, therefore, he insisted was not only unnecessary, but absurd.

Mr. Hume eagerly adopted this conclusion, and proceeded to turn the same reasoning against the existence of mind ; and, according to Dr. Reid, with equal success ; for he seems to admit, that, upon the ideal theory the existence of mind is not more tenable than that of matter. As we have no idea of matter distinct from the sensible qualities we perceive in it, so neither have we any of mind, as the subject of the thoughts or impressions of which we are conscious. The mind, therefore, Mr. Hume concluded, was nothing more than that

“succession of related ideas and impressions, of which we have an intimate memory and consciousness.”

Now, without questioning at present the grounds of either of these opinions, taken separately, I do not at all understand how any man could hold them *both*;—that is, to deny the existence not merely of matter, but of mind also. Berkeley endeavoured to shew, that matter could not exist, inasmuch, as all we know of it are certain sensible qualities, which he contended are merely so many ideas in the perceiving mind, and that therefore their existence, except as perceived, is inconceivable. But when Hume proceeds to contend, that, on the same ground, the existence of mind itself is equally impossible, and adduces this conclusion, not as an *ex-absurdo* refutation of the principles of Berkeley's reasoning, but rather as an extension and completion of the doctrine which the Bishop had built upon it, he plainly excludes any intelligible notion of existence at all, ideal as well as real; leaving us at a loss to understand in what sense he could consistently affirm even his own, much less any other being. There is, in general, more difficulty in understanding than in refuting Mr. Hume's paradoxes;—indeed, it is often the very complication of their absurdity which

occasions the chief embarrassment we find in attempting to deal with them in the way of argument. This is eminently the case with the doctrine before us ; which yet Dr. Reid considered as so legitimate a deduction from Mr. Locke's theory of ideas, that it was this which first led him to re-examine the grounds of it. But whatever be our construction of Mr. Locke's doctrine, we may be sure that philosopher did not mean to talk nonsense. When he says that all the materials of the mind's knowledge and reason are ultimately derived from the experience of its own sensations or operations, he did not anticipate that it would be objected to him, that since the mind, which is the *subject* of those sensations or operations, cannot at the same time be the *object* of them (for this is the amount of the difficulty), that therefore we cannot know its existence. That existence was not only supposed in any speculation which we can make on this, or, indeed, any other subject ; but the particular manner of it, which we call sensation or reflection, was especially the object of the enquiry on hand : to object therefore that the result of that enquiry gave us no proof of such existence, was ridiculous.

With respect to the notion of *mind*, as a particular substance, the subject of thought, Mr. Locke,

in almost the first words of his Essay, has carefully precluded all possibility of cavil on that score. He there expressly disclaims all "physical consideration of the mind, or examination of wherein its essence consists, or by what motions of our spirits, or alterations of our bodies, we come to have any sensation by our organs, or any ideas in our understandings; or whether those ideas do, in their formation, any or all of them depend on matter or no. It shall suffice (he says), to my present purpose, to consider the *discerning faculties of a man*, as they are employed about the objects they have to do with."—that is, plainly, not what idea I have of my mind, or of my mind's ideas, but how I come to have ideas at all, and what is the nature of those ideas, and the degree and certainty of the knowledge which *I* can build upon them.

Mr. Hume, I imagine, did not mean to deny his own existence; that being one of those propositions, of which it is the peculiar happiness that we cannot deny, without (implicitly) affirming it at the same time; and the existence of his ideas and impressions he expressly admits; and yet, short of this, all his difficulty about the idea of mind as the subject of ideas, as far as it has meaning at all, turns upon an obvious quibble.

This, however, was far from being Dr. Reid's

view of the controversy. He did not, it is true, agree with Mr. Hume, that because we have no idea of mind, there can be no such thing ; but he considered it as an unexceptionable consequence of Mr. Locke's doctrine, and therefore a sufficient refutation of it. " Had that philosopher," says he, " turned his attention more particularly to the origin of these two opinions,—that sensible qualities must have a subject which we call body, and that thought must have a subject which we call mind, he would probably have been led to perceive, that sensation and consciousness are not the only sources of human knowledge, and that there are principles of belief in human nature, of which we can give no other account, than that they necessarily result from the constitution of our faculties."

Upon which one can only observe, that had Mr. Locke been led to perceive this conclusion, it is doubtful whether he would have thought the publication of it much calculated to assist, what was the object of his work, a survey of the grounds of human knowledge. To account for a particular belief, by a particular *principle of belief* in our nature, of which we can give no further account, than that it necessarily results from the constitution of our faculties,—that is, that we

have such a belief, or such a principle of belief,—tends but little to enlarge our previous views of the question.

What Dr. Reid precisely meant by a principle of belief, it is difficult to say; but it clearly must be something distinguishable from the ordinary exercise of reason, in the perception of the agreement and disagreement of our ideas, for this was a source of knowledge which he could not mean to accuse Locke of having overlooked. And yet it is observable, that the particular belief which he thus accounts for, merely by the constitution of our faculties, he was at the same time citing as a principle of *necessary* truth. “It is not,” says he, “more evident that two and two make four, than that figure cannot exist unless there be something figured, and motion unless there be something moved. I not only perceive figure and motion, but I perceive them to be qualities. They have a necessary relation to something in which they exist as their subject.”

That a quality cannot exist without a subject, is no doubt a necessary truth; for the proposition is merely identical. But Berkeley would contend, that this distinction of subject and quality is little more than a fiction of our own, without any foundation in the reality of things. He would say, that we

have and can have no notion of the subject as distinguished from its qualities, and have no ground therefore to ascribe these last to an unintelligible *something*, of which we have neither idea nor conception ; and that consequently it is both simpler and more consistent to conclude, that these qualities are merely ideas existing only in the mind.

§ 5. However little disposed to admit Berkeley's conclusions in this matter, we confess that we see nothing in the philosophy of Dr. Reid that at all shakes them, except so far as his overthrow of the doctrine of ideas may be thought to unhinge the reasoning by which, upon that supposition, Berkeley had endeavoured to shew that the existence of a material world is *impossible*. Dr. Reid does not even pretend to assign any *reason* for our belief on this subject, or for that of our existence and personal identity. These truths, we have seen, he considers as purely contingent, the denial of which involves no impossibility or contradiction ; and he resolves an assent to them wholly into the particular constitution of our faculties ; that is to say ;—for excluding the necessary perceptions of reason, I am not aware of, nor has he suggested any other alternative ;—into a blind in-

stinctive impulse, which determines the mind's belief, independently of any sense of necessary connexion, such as essentially distinguishes its *rational* conclusions; and this account of our belief confessedly supposes that it is quite conceivable that we should be deceived as to the objects of it *.

* Perhaps, now, it might be shewn to afford a sort of presumption that we are so. God has made us essentially rational, and it is clearly unlikely that he would interfere to suspend or supersede the perceptions of our reason, without an adequate necessity. But if we cannot *know* the existence of the things we touch or handle, our ignorance is only explicable on one of two suppositions; either the proposition affirming that existence is not true, or, if true, it is one which, from its own nature, is removed beyond the scope and sphere of our faculties. This last presumption, however, is plainly supported by nothing which we can discover in the nature of the proposition itself, and it is further weakened by the fact, that our Maker has certainly intended that we should exercise our understandings about it, since, according to Dr. Reid, he has actually superinduced a particular provision of belief in our constitution, with a view to the conclusion in question; and the only assignable ground for this, is the other branch of an alternative, that the proposition itself was not founded in reality, though it was nevertheless highly expedient that we should believe it to be so. This difficulty, indeed, applies not merely to the doctrine of Reid, but to those of Descartes, Mallebranche, Arnauld, Locke, and, in fact, of almost every philosopher who has treated of the subject; for they all admit a real and specifick difference in the kind of

§ 6. The second of the metaphysical principles which Dr. Reid proposes to consider, is "that whatever begins to exist must have a cause that produces it." Mr. Hume, he observes, was the first to venture to call this truth in question.

Respecting this principle, he insists that we must conclude one of these things,—either it is an opinion for which we have no evidence, and which men have foolishly taken up without ground; or secondly, that it is capable of direct proof by argument; or, thirdly, that it is self-evident and needs no proof.

Of the first of these suppositions he disposes by merely observing, that if true, it would put an end to all philosophy,—to all religion,—to all reasoning beyond the objects of sense,—to all prudence in the conduct of life. This accumulation

certainly attainable in the conclusions which we ground on the perception of the relations of our abstract ideas, and those by which we determine the existence of the objects of our senses. The only remedy for this scepticism I believe is to be found in that more accurate investigation of the nature of the act of mind in perception, which we have before had occasion to allude to; and which, we think, would shew that the difference here supposed, between the two cases, does not in fact exist; but that our perception, even of the properties of matter, involves as distinct and necessary a conclusion of reason, as is implied in any other act of inference whatever.

of unpleasant consequences we may believe would, if urged to Mr. Hume, have operated less as a presumption of the unsoundness of his doctrine, than a testimony to its originality and importance; and, at any rate, he might reasonably urge, that if we *have* evidence for it, and have *not* taken it up foolishly without grounds, it cannot be difficult to shew in what those grounds and that evidence consist.

This, however, Dr. Reid admits that he is unable to do. Accordingly, in treating of the *second* of the suppositions above enumerated, he does not deny that he can find no direct proof of the principle in question. Of the abstract arguments offered by Hobbes, and Clarke, and Locke, he agrees with Mr. Hume, in thinking that they take for granted the thing to be proved; and being a necessary, or general, and not a particular or contingent truth, he is of opinion that it cannot properly be proved from *experience*.

The third case, therefore, is the only one that remains; viz. that it is to be admitted as a first and self-evident principle.

Two reasons, he says, may be urged for this :— First, the universal consent of mankind; not of philosophers only, but of the rude and unlearned vulgar; and, secondly, that mankind not only

assent to it in speculation, but that the practice of life is grounded upon it in the most important matters, even in cases where experience leaves us doubtful ; and that it is impossible to act with common prudence, if we set it aside.

It must be admitted, that nothing can be more unphilosophical than this mode of meeting the difficulty ; which, in fact, instead of explaining, merely presents a re-statement of the very point to be explained. Mr. Hume of course knew as well as Dr. Reid what was the universal persuasion of mankind, himself included, in this respect ; and it was therefore he conceived his discovery, that they have, in fact, no ground *in reason* for this persuasion, to be both curious and important.

Dr. Reid's language, moreover, seems to betray a strange forgetfulness of the proper nature and test of self-evident truth. Universal reception, indeed, forms a powerful presumption of self-evidence in a principle, because it is a necessary consequence of it. But it is in no degree whatever a proof ; on the contrary, it is of the essence of self-evidence that it be clear and perfect to the intuition of every individual ; so that no accumulation, whether of our own experience, or of that of others, can at all add to its cogency. That the

sun will rise to-morrow is, I believe, the persuasion of all mankind, learned and unlearned, and certainly "not only is it entertained in speculation, but the practice of life is grounded upon it in the most important matters;" but though thus combine all the conditions which Dr. Reid seems to think sufficient for its erection into self-evident principle, he himself, liberal as he is in his patents of this kind, would hardly be disposed to recognize it.

§ 7. Nor do we think our author more happy in the manner in which he meets the argument adduced by Hume, to prove that the principle we have been treating of is *not* self-evident.

These, it seems, are three :—First, because according to Mr. Locke, all certainty arises from a comparison of ideas, and a discovery of the unalterable relations ; none of which relations imply the proposition, "that whatever has a beginning must have a cause."

In answer to this, Dr. Reid contents himself with referring to the remarks he had before made on the doctrine of certainty here resorted to. These are found in the third chapter of the same Essay, and they seem to import, that taking ideas in their ancient, and, as Reid considers, only proper

per meaning, as universal or abstract notions of things, without regard to their existence, Locke's position is true, that knowledge consists in the perception of their agreement or disagreement, and that, in fact, it is in this only, that what is strictly called demonstrative evidence can be found.

"But," he adds, "there is another great class of truths, which are not abstract or necessary, and therefore cannot be perceived in the agreement or disagreement of ideas. These are the truths we know concerning the real existence, whether of ourselves or of every thing else, and may be called contingent truths."

But admitting this distinction to be accurate, it is not apparent in what way it at all bears upon Hume's objection. The principle in question is expressly ascribed by Dr. Reid himself to the class of *necessary*, and not of *contingent* truths. "It is not," he himself observes, when shewing that it cannot be proved from experience, "that things which begin to exist commonly have a cause, or even that they always in fact have a cause, but that they *must* have a cause, and *cannot* begin to exist without a cause." It seems to follow, therefore, that the criterion of its truth, which was suggested by Mr. Hume, is by Dr. Reid's admis-

sion the true one, since the grounds of it are to be sought, not in our experience of particular or contingent fact, but in the speculation of those abstract and universal relations, which are equally applicable to all existences.

§ 8. For the rest, we apprehend, Dr. Reid is mistaken in supposing that our knowledge of what he calls contingent truth differs at all in the grounds and manner of its acquirement from that of abstract or necessary truth. All truth, as we have before said, is *in itself* equally necessary and certain. It differs only as the nature of the existences, which form the subjects of it, are various. And as it always supposes a *proposition*, the conclusion in every case equally results from our perception of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas involved in the terms of that proposition; that is, of the *meaning* of these terms; whether they apply to our conceptions of abstract or our experience of particular existence. In the present case, if, as Hume asserts, the proposition that every thing which begins to exist must have a cause of its existence, is neither intuitively nor demonstratively certain, it can only be because the mind perceives no such disagreement between the ideas involved in the terms of it, as we have just

spoken of: and stated thus generally, I am not sure that any such is perceivable; for, as we shall afterwards have occasion to shew, it is not clear that *existence*, considered merely in the abstract, does imply cause. That which necessarily does so, is *particular* existence; and as all existences except one, are particular, it is plain that Hume's theorem, even if admitted generally, could never be applicable to any given case.

Thus, if the *beginning* of a thing's being, refer, as it must do, to some particular point of time, we conceive Hume himself would have found it impossible to exclude the notion of some cause, which determined its occurrence at that moment rather than at any other. Stated in this way, the denial of the proposition involves, to our apprehension, at least, as palpable a contradiction as does the negation of any mathematical axiom.

§ 9. The second argument by which Mr. Hume attempts to invalidate the principle in question, that every thing beginning to exist must have a cause of that existence, consists in the assertion, that the fact of a thing beginning to exist without any such cause, is perfectly *conceivable* in itself; and he insists, that since it is admitted

that whatever we can conceive is possible, there is no contradiction in supposing it true.

Here again Dr. Reid differs from him, not as to the fact itself, but as to the criterion of truth to which it is referred. For it is a peculiar opinion of his, that philosophers have been altogether mistaken in this assumption, that whatever we can conceive is possible. His doctrine on this subject is to be found in the third Chapter of his fourth Essay, and deserves particular attention; for if it be accurate, it should seem to involve a greater danger to the stability of human knowledge than does the paradox itself, which Mr. Hume had endeavoured to build on its contrary. It is strange indeed that Reid should not himself have been aware, that by this single position he was at once cutting away the foundation of our certainty of all necessary truth whatsoever; the only criterion of which, according to his own definition, is, that the contrary is impossible;—that is, that we cannot conceive it to be. But if that which we cannot conceive may still *be*, I apprehend Mr. Hume himself would ask no better datum or standing-place, from whence to commence his operations against all the conclusions of human reason.

Happily, however, nothing can be weaker than

Dr. Reid's reasoning on this point. It is this. "Whatever is said to be possible or impossible, is expressed by a proposition. Now what is it to conceive a proposition? I think it is no more than to understand distinctly its meaning. The axiom, therefore, amounts to this—Every proposition of which you understand the meaning distinctly, is possible. Now I understand as distinctly the meaning of this proposition,—Any two sides of a triangle are together equal to the third; as of this,—Any two sides are together greater than the third; and yet the former is impossible."

Dr. Reid's error consists in a total misconception of the proper nature of the question. Possibility and impossibility are indeed expressed by propositions; but they belong or refer, not to propositions, but to *existence*. Propositions properly are true or false; not possible or impossible.

Again: conception is not rightly applied to propositions; we may be said to understand a proposition, but the object of conception is not the proposition itself, but the existence of that which is affirmed by it.

When Clarke, in the quotation given by Dr. Reid, asserts that "the bare having the idea of the proposition proves the thing not impossible, for that of an impossible proposition there can be

no idea," he is equally inaccurate in his expression, in which he confounds the impossibility of the proposition with that of the thing which forms the subject of it. As far as propositions are possible at all, they are all equally so; and we may have the idea of the proposition when we cannot have that of the existence which it affirms.

"That we can conceive an impossible proposition," Dr. Reid observes, "follows from what Mr. Hume himself has observed, that in all cases, when we dissent from any person, we conceive both sides of the question, but we only believe one. Thus a man who believes that two and three make five, must believe it to be impossible that two and three should not make five." It is strange that this very illustration should not have enlightened Dr. Reid as to the confusion of terms and ideas, in which he had bewildered himself. That he should as readily *understand the meaning* of the proposition that $2+3=5$, as that $2+3=4$ is acknowledged. But surely he could not equally *conceive either as doing so*. Is it not plain then, that conceiving the truth of a proposition and understanding the meaning of it, are not convertible expressions?

"But," says Dr. Reid, "mathematicians often require us to conceive things that are impossible,

in order to prove them not so. Conceive, says Euclid, a right line drawn from one point to another of the circumference of a circle, to fall without the circle." I apprehend, however, that Euclid does not call upon us to *conceive* a line so drawn, but to *suppose* it. This very instance might have illustrated the essential difference between the two cases. For certainly it is impossible to form a conception of that which is here supposed, insomuch that the sense of this impossibility might have served the mathematician instead of a demonstration, had he not by the principle of his reasoning excluded any reference to such a criterion*.

§ 10. It is to be observed, that though what we conceive to be possible may not in fact be so, yet that which we clearly see to be impossible cannot but be so. In the one case our specula-

* Conception, as has been said, concerns only *things* or *existences*. But the object of pure mathematical reasoning is not existence, either real or possible, but the *relations* of those abstract ideas of figure and quantity, which are to be found only in the mind. The Geometer does not demonstrate to us that things either are or may be, but that they *must* be; and *necessary connection* is never the object of conception, as we shall find at once on the experiment.

tion respects only the relations of contingent existence, of the extent and variety of which we are confessedly ignorant: in the other, the negation always results from a sense of contradiction between the relations which we know; and its certainty cannot be affected by our ignorance of any or all other relations than those immediately concerned in the proposition before us. A peasant, who knows nothing more of numbers, knows as certainly as Newton or Euler, that twice two cannot make five.

Strictly speaking, we cannot affirm any thing to be possible but that which we know is or has been, nor any thing impossible but that which contradicts relations which we do know. When we say, therefore, that whatever we can conceive is possible, we merely mean that we do not know that it is impossible; a conclusion of ignorance, which, for the purpose of argument, it is often as important to be able to attain in some questions, as the most precise knowledge in others.

Whether the raising of a man from the dead be possible, no one knows *certainly*, who has not witnessed the fact. But to a sceptic, who, in opposition to the testimony we have for it, should contend that it was in itself impossible, it would be a sufficient answer to say, that we could con-

ceive it to take place. Our conception, it is true, does not determine of its actual possibility, because that may and probably does depend upon relations of which we are ignorant. We can only mean that it involves no contradiction of those we do know; and it is solely in reference to these that the sceptic, on the other hand, must ground his assertion of the contrary opinion.

Thus, though we believe it possible that a man should be raised from the dead, we know it is impossible that a man should so raise himself, because by death we understand the extinction of those active powers, the operation of which is nevertheless supposed in this case.

The possibility of existence, therefore, of which our conception is the test, involves no conclusion of absolute knowledge, but is applicable merely in the way of argument against the dogmatism of negative assertion, which may be brought against such existence. This may be illustrated by the instance wherewith Dr. Reid concludes his doctrine on this head. "It is possible, you say, that God might have made an universe of rational and sensible creatures, into which no evil, either natural or moral, should ever enter. It may be so," he answers, "for what I know. But how do you

know it is possible? That you can conceive it, I grant; but this is no proof." But is it not plain, that all that any man ever intended by saying of any thing beyond his own experience and knowledge, that it is possible, was no more than is precisely conveyed in Reid's own phrase, "It may be so for what I know"—certainly, it cannot be understood as a *proof*, unless taken in connection with some particular assumption respecting the omnipotence of the Deity.

§ 11. If it were true, then, as Hume seems to assert, that we could conceive of a thing beginning to exist without a cause, it would follow—not certainly that things do exist without causes; for this was not what Hume himself proposed to prove;—but that there was no such contradiction involved in the assertion, as that we could argue with assurance from the opposite proposition, "that every thing existing must have a cause." As far, therefore, as Dr. Reid has shewn any thing to the contrary, we conceive the test or criterion assigned by Mr. Hume is undeniable. Our objection respects only the *manner* of its application in the particular case before us.

With a view, however, to the clearer apprehen-

sion of the question, it will be useful to examine a little more fully the real nature and province of conception.

Dr. Reid's notions on this point, as on almost every other, are far from exact. He confounds, as we have seen, *understanding* with *conception*, and this again with *imagination*. "Imagination," says he, "as distinguished from conception, seems to be only one species of conception; viz. the conception of *visible* objects. I imagine the diagram of a problem; I conceive its demonstration; but it is not so proper to say, I imagine its demonstration." But neither surely is it proper to say, we *conceive* the demonstration—we can only *understand* it. We may add, that it would be more accurate to define the imagination as the conception of *sensible*, rather than merely of *visible* objects. We imagine a flavour, a sound, a passion, a pain, as well as a colour or shape; though not with the same distinctness perhaps, because the particular original impressions themselves are not so marked and definite.

The business of the understanding seems more peculiarly with words or signs, and those definitions and propositions which suppose their employment. The objects of the imagination and conception are exclusively things or existences, either

actual or possible ; and the distinction between them will perhaps be found to consist in this—that the imagination represents to us the combinations of those things or qualities of things, the knowledge of which we have acquired in the perception of *sensible* objects ; while in conception the mind may be found to contemplate those objects *intelligibly* only ; or as they are apprehended by reason. Thus we should say, the mind *imagines* a triangle and *conceives* an *equilateral* one. What it imagines is a figure supplied by sense from the diagrams of the “ Elements,” what it conceives is a figure understood by reason from the definitions. It is plain here, that what we imagine we can also conceive—but not in the same way. We imagine it with reference to our recollection of an impression of sense ; we conceive it in respect of our knowledge or understanding of its nature or properties.

In a word—The subject of the imagination is always some impression of sense ; that of conception, some idea of mind. It may be added, that we can imagine nothing but what we could perceive, did it exist ; whereas, it is seldom that those qualities of a thing which distinguish it as the object of our conception, would be cognizable by sense. Thus, in the instance just given, we can-

not imagine a perfectly equilateral triangle, because we cannot, even in perception, know without measurement the exact equality of the sides of a figure of that kind.

It should seem, however, to follow, from this, that conception is no further the limit of possibility, than possibility may be said to be so of conception. Whatever we can conceive to be, is possible, (in the sense and under the restriction before suggested) because, in fact, it is only, as far as we can understand a thing to be possible, that we can conceive it as being.

The fact is, that what the understanding establishes is the general proposition as *true*, which the conception proceeds to try by a particular case.

§ 12. The distinction we have been insisting upon appears to be not without importance for the proper apprehension of the question in hand.

When we say we can conceive any thing, we should be careful to know that we do not merely mean we can *imagine* it. A man may be said to be able to imagine a thing's coming into existence *without* a cause; for, in fact, he cannot imagine it's so doing *with* a cause. As we never perceive any necessary connection between any two phe-

nomena, a cause, whether as absent or present, can in no case be the object of the imagination. We can imagine a luminous body suddenly making its appearance in the middle of the sky without any known or visible cause of its being there ; and as readily can we imagine its disappearance : and we think it probable that this is all that either Hume or Reid intended, when they say that they can conceive a thing's beginning to exist without a cause.

For, taking conception in the sense just given, as that act whereby the mind attempts to *realize*, as it were, the conclusions of the understanding, we do not find it possible to form the one in question. Our idea of *cause*, like those of power, number, equality, and indeed, every other general idea we have, is exclusively the creature of the understanding. Any conception, therefore, which we form on the subject, can refer only to the conclusions of that faculty ; and we can no otherwise *conceive* a thing's beginning to exist at any time or place, without some cause or reason determining its existence, rather than its non-existence, at that particular time or place, than we can *understand* how it might do so. And this we are persuaded, that any one will find, upon trial, if the experiment be made with some little attention to

the distinctions that have been suggested, as to the several provinces of imagination and conception.

§ 13. We are so totally ignorant of the particular cause of any existence, or how any thing exists at all, that when we are called upon to conceive of a thing's beginning to exist, either with or without a cause, there is a danger lest we should confound the necessary absence of idea which attaches to one part of the proposition with the contradiction which belongs to the other. The fact I take to be, that we cannot properly conceive the beginning of existence at all: and if all that we knew of things was generally that they *exist*, I doubt whether it would be possible for us to form the notion, either of the cause or of the beginning of that existence.

What would seem more immediately to suggest the notion of cause, is not the mere existence of a thing, but the particular mode, degree, or circumstances of that existence. If I take up a couple of pebbles from the beach, and ask myself how they came to exist, I admit I do not immediately see what answer could be given, or that there would be any absurdity involved in the supposition that they always have existed. But the case is different when we come to consider the particular

shape, size, position, and place of these substances; the mind, in perceiving the differences between them in these respects, as intuitively perceives that there is some *reason* for this difference; for that a thing should have been of a particular shape, size, and position, and no reason be why it should be so, rather than of any other shape or size, is absurd. If it be said that it was of the *nature* of the pebble so to be, or that it may always have been so; this, as far as the words have any real meaning, seems to include as distinct reference to causation as any answer whatever. By the word *nature* here, we must mean something different from the mere external phenomena themselves, and which in some sort determines them, or we mean nothing. To say of a pebble that it is round and smooth, because it is round and smooth, is nonsense. It is equally absurd to say it is thus because it is of its *nature* so to be, if we intend no more by this account than the former; and to affirm that there is no reason why it is round and smooth, rather than rough and angular like the other, I think every one will find, on the experiment, to contradict the necessary intuition of his mind.

That the substance before me might have been of any other shape or size, is either possible or it

is not possible. If *not possible*, this of course supposes some reason in the nature of things which precluded such possibility, and therefore unalterably determined its being in the manner we see. If *possible*, we as necessarily perceive there must be some reason or cause, which, of two or more possibilities, determined the being of this particular one. The conclusion is equally certain on either alternative, and I cannot conceive a third one.

The reason of any thing may be said to be only the statement of its cause * ; the perception of which, therefore, is merely a particular case of that act of the mind which necessarily concludes that of two events equally possible, there must be something external to the event itself, which determined the occurrence of the one rather than the other. Of the pebbles in my hand, before I withdraw my hold from them, it is obviously impossible, previous to the experiment, to foretel in which direction they will move, or whether they will move at all. And when we find on trial, that they take one particular course, out of a thousand

* This distinction is somewhat loosely expressed ; but the attempt of a more accurate definition would perhaps involve a reference to other and larger views of the subject than have yet been given.

equally assignable, the mind does not more clearly see that two and two make four, than that there must have been some cause which determined that particular event rather than any other. In fact, either the negation of such a necessity is nonsense, or the question itself is such. The very act of the mind, one of the earliest as well as commonest of its exercise, implied in the use of the interrogative particle *why*, is unintelligible upon such a supposition.

§ 14. There is one remark more, growing out of this discussion, which it seems not unimportant to notice.

The cause or reason, as we have before observed, may not be external to the existence of the thing itself; for existence, taken absolutely, does not necessarily imply cause; indeed, if it did, as that cause must be some other existence, we should at once involve ourselves in an endless series; but it must be something, either in or out of the thing, differing from that *particular manner* of existence which constitutes the phenomenon to be accounted for. That the cause of the particular appearance or motion of a substance may be something within as well as without the substance, is in itself equally intelligible; nay it is

equally known by experience : for we ourselves are as conscious of the operation of such an internal cause of our own motions, as we are of the communication of motion from our own substance to another. It is the effect of other reasonings that leads us to conclude, that the source of motion in the stone is of the latter, rather than the former kind.

We have seen that it is the sense of *particularity*, which, by suggesting the question why a thing is thus and not otherwise, necessarily involves the conclusion of *cause*; and where this sense does not exist, we do not see that the mind has any ground for such conclusion. Thus, in the instance last mentioned, the cause of the fall of the stone we suppose to be something in the nature of the stone itself, which we call gravitation. If another stone were found upon experiment to fall in an opposite direction, we might in the same manner account for the phenomenon, upon the supposition of some other occult quality, appetite, or principle in the substance itself; but that quality, it is clear, must be different from that which, in the first substance, operated effects so different; and the question might then remain,—what was the cause of this difference? or why, since it is equally conceivable that they might both have

been endowed with the same principle, it happens that they are so by opposite ones ?

But when we find *all* bodies fall in the same manner and direction, and that their tendency to this is precisely in proportion to their quantities, I do not see that this question can properly be said to arise ; and accordingly there seems nothing absurd or contradictory in the supposition, that there may be no (external) *cause*, properly speaking, of the gravitation of bodies, but that it is an essential quality of matter itself. And the same we might say of those other properties which we find common to all material substances, and which seem indispensable to its being ; and therefore even of matter itself, considered abstractedly as the mere subject of those common and universal properties. Beyond these, our notion of it is little other than that of *existence*, the idea of which, taken simply and absolutely, I have said, does not, to my apprehension, involve that of cause. So far, therefore, the dogma which some philosophers, and some Christian sects, have maintained of the *eternity* of matter, may not appear in itself to be either as absurd or impossible as their adversaries have professed to shew. And, perhaps, the supposition itself would have seemed less obnoxious, had it been observed, that, at any rate, its admis-

sion could not at all affect that which forms the only really important point of the enquiry,—our inference of the existence of an original and supreme intelligence, the Disposer of all things. For what is certain and obvious is, that matter not merely existing, but existing in a manner, and under circumstances of which we have seen no account whatever can be found, in any notion we have of its own nature or essence ; a *cause* of its so existing must be sought, not in itself, but from without ; and human reason has hitherto been able to suggest none other which is either conceivable in itself, or adequate to the effects, than the action and contrivance of a perfectly wise and powerful Being, operating necessarily, uniformly, and immediately throughout the universe.

§ 15. And here the course of our discussion leads us to a remark, which we think is not without importance in this enquiry. Against the usual arguments for the existence of one great Being, the source of all others, it has always been urged, that if every existence suppose a cause, that of the Being himself, here described, must do so equally ; or if, again, we can conceive Him as existing of himself, it cannot be impossible to make this supposition of that order of things, from which

alone we infer His existence ; an inference which it is said, it assists us little to make, if it only remove the difficulty a step. The metaphysical reasonings which have been employed to meet this difficulty, from the supposed impossibility of an eternal succession of dependent beings existing without any independent cause at all, are, we are inclined to think, really conclusive in themselves ; but, we believe, they have hitherto been felt as more fitted to embarrass than to convince the understandings of the common class of speculators.

But if the view which we have ventured to take of the real nature and limit of the argument from cause and effect, be accurate, it will be found, perhaps, that the objection in question does not at all apply to the case. Existence, we have said, considered abstractedly in itself, does not strictly suppose external *cause*. From the fact that a thing *is*, we cannot at all conclude that there is some cause of its being other than that involved in the nature of the thing itself. What is, may always have been. Nay, the first presumption is, that it always has been, and the proof of the contrary rests with those who adopt the opposite supposition ; and that proof, in the case of the order of things around us, lies, as we have seen, not in their mere being, considered simply in it-

self, but in the *particular manner, limits, time, and place* of that being ; every circumstance of which, as being one of an infinite number of others equally conceivable, necessarily supposes the operation of some reason or cause determining its existence.

But it is plain, that nothing of this particularity and limits enters into the only consistent notion which we can frame of God. On the contrary, what essentially distinguishes our notion of Him, is that utter negation of any such characters, which is expressed by those attributes of Eternal and Infinite which we ascribe to His existence. And it is in this sense that we should say, that self-existence is necessarily included in our idea of God, for it is equally so in that of every existence, considered abstractedly from any thing particular or determinate in the time, place, or manner of its occurrence ; and therefore is by necessity so in any notion we are able to frame of that one Great Being whose existence comprehends and pervades every other.

§ 16. But it is time to bring this discussion to a close. Of the arguments alleged by Hume, in disproof of the principle that every thing must have a cause, we have already considered two :—

there yet remains a *third*, derived apparently from Mr. Hume's peculiar notion of causation, and which, as stated by Dr. Reid, is shortly this,—that “what we call a cause, is only something antecedent to, and always conjoined to the effect.” Now, if this was all this ingenious philosopher understood by the word *cause*,—if his notion of cause and effect was reducible to this simple perception of invariable succession in the phenomena, it followed of course, that the denial of the principle, “that every thing beginning to exist must have a cause,” neither involved any inconsistency of his ideas, nor any supposition that was not in itself perfectly conceivable and possible; for it merely affirms that a thing might begin to exist without there being “something else antecedent and joined to it;” a proposition of which, as we do not perfectly understand the sense, we should be the last to pretend to controvert.

It is strange that a man, not merely of Mr. Hume's acuteness, but of common sense, should suffer himself to be so wildered in the chase of paradox, as to mistake the simple apprehension of one of the most obvious and ordinary notions, in the way which this author has done, in the sense here assigned to the word *cause*. True it is, that all we know of what we call *particular* causes

are their invariable antecedency to certain effects. But our notion of causation, so far from arising from the observation of this connexion, is clearly previous to, and independent of it; insomuch, that it is from that idea alone that we ascribe to the antecedent its operative and efficient relation to the consequent. The idea is not the creature of invariable succession, for it is often as full and clear on the first trial as the thousandth; beside that succession repeated for ever could never engender any other notion, than that of invariable succession *. It is only because we previously and necessarily know that every change must have *some* cause, that we are led to identify any particular antecedent or concomitant circumstance as such.

* Day and night, as Dr. Reid observes, have succeeded each other from the beginning of time, and yet no one supposes the one to be the *cause* of the other.

VI.

§ 1. THE last of the metaphysical principles which Dr. Reid considers, is that design and intelligence in the cause may be inferred with certainty from marks or signs of it in the effect.

This also, it seems, had been questioned by Mr. Hume; and, indeed, it is an obvious corollary from the rest of his doctrine of causation. If we cannot necessarily infer a cause at all from any effect, of course we cannot infer an intelligent cause.

I imagine, however, Hume's difficulty here to have been, that even that inference of some antecedent or other (into which he has resolved our whole notion of causation) which experience leads us to make as probable in human works and transactions, cannot apply to the productions of nature, where we have had no experience either of the existence, or the manner of operation, of the supposed cause. "In a word," says he, at the close of the eleventh section of his Inquiry into the Hu-

man Understanding, "I much doubt whether it be possible for a cause to be known only by its effects; or to be of so singular and particular a nature, as to have no parallel or similarity with any other cause or object that has ever fallen under observation. It is only where two *species* of objects are found to be constantly conjoined, that we can infer the one from the other; and were an effect to be presented which was entirely singular, and could not be comprehended under any known species, I do not see that we could form any conjecture or inference at all concerning its cause. If," he adds, "experience and analogy be indeed the only guides which we can reasonably follow in inferences of this nature, both the effect and cause must bear a similarity to other effects and causes which we know, and which we have found in many instances to be conjoined with each other."

§ 2. It does not appear that Dr. Reid was disposed to object to the accuracy of Hume's reasoning from the principle here supposed. But in this case, as in the former two, he denies the principle itself; and contends that it is not from experience that we know that design and intelligence in the cause may be inferred with certainty from

certain marks in the effect ; but that the conclusion is one of necessary and universal truth.

In proof of this he observes, that “intelligence, design, and skill, are not the objects of the external senses ; and that even in ourselves we cannot properly be said to be conscious of the natural and acquired talents which we possess, but only of the operations of mind in which they are exerted. A man’s wisdom or eloquence is known to us only by the signs of it in his conduct and speech, and so of all his other qualities, mental or moral ; and yet we judge of these with as little doubt or hesitation, as we judge of the immediate objects of sense. It is, therefore, no less a part of the human constitution to judge of men’s minds and character from the signs of them in their actions and discourse, than to judge of corporeal objects by our senses.” All which is very plain, and, we apprehend, undisputed ; but he adds, “ But every judgment which we form of this kind is only a particular application of the general principle, that intelligence in the cause may be inferred from marks or signs in the effect.”

§ 3. Nothing, we think, more remarkably evinces Dr. Reid’s habitual confusion of ideas on these subjects, than his thus confounding the act

of the mind, whereby, from seeing a watch, we *infer* that it had an intelligent author, with that by which, from certain perceptions of his discourse and conduct when present, we *denominate* the watchmaker himself to be intelligent *.

In this last case it is plain, there is no question of *inference*, nor any reference to the relation of cause or effect at all. Dr. Reid himself, in the same passage, has assimilated the process to that by which we judge of corporeal objects by our senses; but surely he would not say, that from perceiving an object to be round or white, we infer from these qualities as effects, certain powers of whiteness or roundness in their cause: and equally absurd is it to say, that we infer a man's wisdom or eloquence from his acting wisely or

* Reid adds, "How do I know that any man has understanding? I never saw his understanding. I see only certain effects, which my judgment leads me to conclude to be the marks and tokens of it." I apprehend that he might equally question his knowledge of the heat in the candle or the weight in the stone, upon the same ground, that he never *saw* either of those qualities. It should be observed, that it is not in the mere articulation of sounds that we perceive intelligence, but in the *employment of signs*. What we see is, not certainly a man's understanding, but that a man understands us; a fact which we afterwards express by attributing to him understanding.

talking eloquently. Wisdom or eloquence are mere abstractions of our own, which, far from being capable of being the causes of any thing or course of action, do not properly exist at all except in our own ideas.

We judge, indeed, of a man's understanding by his words and conduct, as we judge of his strength by his blows, or of his power of motion by his walking. They are the natural and appropriate manifestations of the several faculties referred to ; and when we say he possesses such faculties, we merely mean to express, in a more general way, that he can perform such actions. In fine, we perceive the powers of a man's understanding as we perceive the powers of his body, and with equal directness, from their *exercise* alone. As in one case, from certain motions of his limbs, we perceive that he can pull, or lift, or dance, or run ; so, from certain acts of speech or conduct, we perceive that he can attend, or understand, or design, or recollect ; we may be said to infer intelligence in the one case only as we infer agility or strength in the other ; and, in fact, in neither do we anything but merely substitute the general expression for the particular one. We may add, that where the cause is assumed or known as a single and definite one, the conclusion of its intelligence, from marks of

design in the effects, approaches to necessity. If, therefore, Reid merely meant, that supposing the frame of the world to have had an author, we necessarily perceive that he is an intelligent being, there is nothing to object to his conclusion. We would only observe, that in this case we do not properly infer a relation of cause and effect; since we assume the cause, and merely *denominate* or *specify* it from the effect *.

§ 4. Dr. Reid proceeds next to shew, that we do not learn this truth from experience.

For this he offers two reasons. First, because it is a necessary truth, and not a contingent one; and, secondly, because experience can shew a connexion between a sign and the thing signified by it, in those cases only where both the sign and the thing signified are perceived, and have always been preserved in conjunction. Thus, he observes,

* It is observable that Dr. Reid had already ascribed our belief that there is life and intelligence in our fellow-men, to a particular provision or instinct of our nature, and arranged it accordingly under the head of "First Principles of *contingent* Truths;" and yet that same belief he here adduces as only a particular case of the *necessary* principle, that design or intelligence in the cause may be inferred with *certainly* from marks or signs of it in the effect."

“thought is the sign of a thinking principle in mind; but no one can know by experience that thought cannot be without a mind; because, though by consciousness we have the immediate knowledge of thought in ourselves, yet we have no immediate knowledge of a mind. So too with respect to a machine and the purpose of its author; the one we perceive immediately, but the latter cannot be an immediate object of perception; and therefore, experience can never inform us of any connexion between the one and the other, far less of a necessary connexion.” Upon the first of the instances here given, I must observe, that since all we mean by the term mind is that power or principle in us by which we think, the proposition, that thought may be without a mind, has, in reality, no meaning. Otherwise we are not prepared to admit that it is not by experience that we know that *we* think. How else do we know it? and what is consciousness itself but the mind’s experience of its own sensations and operations? It is true that in this case the evidence of experience ceases to have that empirical character, which, in every other instance, distinguishes its conclusions from those of reason. The information of our consciousness is *necessarily* certain; since the objects of its perception exist only as

they are so perceived, and, on that account, as we have before shewed, we conceive Dr. Reid in error in classing this among the principles of *contingent* truth.

With respect to the second instance alleged by Dr. Reid, the difficulty turns wholly upon the same mistake which we have already adverted to in his reasonings upon this subject. The distinction of the purpose of the author of a machine, from the author himself, is merely in our mode of expression. But to speak of that purpose as the *cause* of the machine, and to object that it cannot be the "immediate object of our perception," is to confound words with things. The cause of the machine is the *man*, or intelligent being who made it. That such beings do make such machines, we surely know by experience; and it is from experience, and that alone, that we reason, when we refer any similar production to such a being, as the probable author of it.

§ 5. Dr. Reid, in fact, throughout this discussion, has confounded the connexion which we perceive between any two ideas, and that which we suppose between any two things or events. The former is no doubt a necessary connexion; it is perceived immediately, and of course experi-

ence can have nothing whatever to do with the grounds of our conclusion. Nor is the relation of cause and effect at all involved in it. The latter is purely contingent ; it can never, from its very nature, be necessary. As we know things or existences only by experience, of course it is only so that we can know the fact of their relations to each other.

Thus when it is said, that from the marks of design and contrivance in a machine, we can infer intelligence in its cause, we agree with Dr. Reid, that our conclusion is a necessary one ; it results from our perception of the agreement between the ideas expressed by the terms, design and intelligence. The argument here is plainly no more one of cause and effect, than in the case of any ordinary syllogism. But the inferring from a particular effect, or kind of effect, that it must have had a particular cause, or kind of cause, involves always a question of *fact*. The subjects referred to are things or existences. A *cause* supposes an *agent*, either mediate or immediate, and it is absurd to speak of purpose, or design, or intelligence, or any such abstract notion of our own, as operating this, or any other effect whatsoever.

§ 6. In this case, therefore, precisely as in the

former two, we can see no force whatever in the objection which Dr. Reid urges against the criterion by which Mr. Hume proposes to adjudicate the question. We agree with this last, that experience, and the analogy of what we know, is the sole ground we have of reasoning in any question of particular cause and effect, and are only at issue with him as to the objection which he builds upon that ground.

That objection itself may easily be disposed of. "I doubt," says Mr. Hume, "whether it be possible for a cause to be known only by its effect, or to be of so singular and particular a nature as to have no parallel, and no similarity with any cause or object that have ever fallen under our observation. It is only where two *species* of objects are found to be conjoined, that we can infer the one from the other; and were an effect presented which was entirely singular, and could not be comprehended under any known species, I do not see that we could form any conjecture or inference at all concerning its cause."

The argument seems shortly to be this, that since we know by experience of the existence of certain intelligent beings, called men, as the authors of certain machines and contrivances; when we meet with a work of a similar kind, we may

reasonably refer it to such a person as its cause. But as we have no previous experience of the existence of an intelligent author of nature, we cannot infer his being from his supposed works alone.

This is plainly the stress of the reasoning, and even admitting the principle of it, all that we could conclude would seem to be, that we cannot in such a case attain the same degree of *certainty* as in the other ; but why the analogy should fail altogether it suggests no reason whatever.

In fact, however, the want of previous knowledge, here alluded to, does not in the least affect even the certainty of our inference from cause and effect, but applies merely to the distinctness of idea which we are able to attain respecting that cause. That every thing has *some* cause, we know necessarily ;—with respect to the particular kind of its cause, we must judge by experience, as it is only by experience that we know any thing of the operation of particular causes at all. Now there are but two kinds of cause of which we can form a conception ;—viz. intelligent and unintelligent. When we ascribe any given effect to one or other of these causes, we do so simply in reference to the invariable and inevitable distinction which experience tells to subsist in their respective productions ; and the conclusion from this

experience is so far equally certain, independently of any other knowledge we may have had of the degree of intelligence supposed in the effect, or in the manner in which it is manifested. These last considerations can in no sort affect our first distribution of inference. They merely suggest a subdivision of one of the branches of it. Judging that the cause in question is an intelligent rather than an unintelligent one, we now divide the effects of the former into those resulting from beings of whose nature and manner of operation we have otherwise had experience, and into those of beings respecting whom we have not that knowledge. We may distinguish these as the works of man, and the works of nature; but although we thus know more of one of these causes than the other, and form a more definite and distinct idea of it, it is plain that our former conclusion of that other cause, as an *intelligent* one, is not in the least affected by this circumstance.

§ 7. "If," says Hume, "experience and analogy be our only guide in inferences of this nature, both the effect and cause must bear a similarity and resemblance to other effects and causes, which we know and which we have found in many instances to be conjoined with each other." Un-

doubtedly,—but surely when we ascribe a natural production, the structure of the eye for instance, to a being endowed with an intelligence analogous to that which in human creatures has invented and elaborated the mechanism of the telescope, Mr. Hume would hardly say that our inference here is not exactly limited by the very conditions which he assigns, or that both the cause and effect we suppose do not bear a resemblance to those which we have experienced. The whole of Hume's objection, in fact, amounts precisely to this,—that because we know nothing more of the one cause, than that it is an intelligent one, that therefore we cannot know even so much. But surely our knowledge of any one thing, or quality of a thing, can have no dependence upon our ignorance of another. The *certainty* of our knowledge, and its *extent*, are plainly different and independent considerations.

With respect to Mr. Hume's doubt whether it be possible that a cause can be known only by its effects, we are rather disposed to invert it, and question whether it can possibly be known otherwise. As a *cause* it certainly cannot. But if Mr. Hume meant no more than that we cannot know the existence of any thing or being merely by conceiving of it as a cause, unassisted by other or pre-

vious means of knowledge, the question resolves itself into the one we have last considered, respecting the *necessity* of the inference from cause and effect at all. This has been already considered; and we believe that every one will find, that in considering any particular thing, a watch or a pebble, he cannot possibly, without a sense of absurdity, exclude the conclusion of the operation of some cause which has determined its existence to be thus and not otherwise. Equally certain is it that that cause must be a *thing* or *being* of some kind; for it is such only that can be conceived to operate upon other things or beings; though of the particular nature of it we can only judge by the analogies of our own experience—the argument from which it is admitted can in no case involve any *necessary* conclusion, and may vary in its cogency from the merest presumption to a sense of certainty, practically not at all less irresistible than that which belongs to mathematical demonstration.

§ 8. “The argument from final causes,” says Dr. Reid, in the same chapter, “when reduced to a syllogism, has these two premises:—First, that design and intelligence in the cause may with certainty be inferred from marks or signs of it in the

effect. This is the principle we have been considering, and we may call it the *major* proposition of the argument. The second, which we call the *minor* proposition, is, that there are the clearest marks of design and wisdom in the works of nature, and the conclusion is, that the works of nature are the effects of a wise and intelligent cause."

In this, as in almost every other case, it is the argument that makes the syllogism, and not the syllogism the argument. The major here, as usual, is nothing more than the generalization of the particular proposition included in the minor. If it be true that there are the clearest marks of wisdom or design in the works of nature, the conclusion is evident; for by the marks of wisdom and design we mean merely the marks of a wise and intelligent cause.

§ 9. The true question therefore is, what it is that essentially constitutes the marks of *design* in a thing. Design supposes intelligence as implying the perception of an *end*. Instinct or appetite may pursue an *object* for its own sake, but to pursue for the sake of another supposes, in this apprehension of its subserviency to such a purpose, an act of understanding. A child, from the mere

suggestion of appetite, may reach out its hand to pluck an apple from a tree, but if it proceed to take a stick to knock it down, it is properly said to exercise intelligence. The act is one which mere appetite alone could never suggest. Appetite merely gives the desire of the object ; understanding alone can perceive the means *.

It is not, therefore, any peculiarity of structure, however regular or complex, which implies contrivance, but the perception of its adaptation to a given purpose. Till we can identify the probable end, the inference of its being the work of intelligence, from its apparent resemblance to those which we know to be such, is comparatively weak. The properties of matter are infinitely various, and among them it is easily conceivable there may be one by which its particles, under certain circumstances, arrange themselves in certain definite forms. The phenomena of crystallization present, in fact, a case precisely of this kind. The forms which matter thus assumes are regular and uniform to the most mathematical nicety ; insomuch that to reproduce them with perfect accuracy requires, in human workmen, a considerable application of

* This coincides with Franklin's definition of man as a *tool-making* animal.

care and skill ; and yet we cannot say that any such is supposed in the cause of their natural production, because we cannot detect any end or purpose to be answered by it. The case would be distinctly different, if we found these crystals only under circumstances where their peculiar figure and size rendered them precisely subservient to some useful purpose. It may be conceived to be a property of matter that its particles, when at liberty, tend to aggregate in a certain and definite manner ; but no principle of this kind, nor any thing short of intelligence, and indeed a power of motion, can be supposed to enable the thing thus formed to limit its appearance to certain definite circumstances of connexion and relation with another and perfectly independent substance. It is true that this last result may, in any particular instance, be the work of chance, and if it be one of rare or irregular occurrence, such an account of the matter is admissible ; but if the combination in question be invariable, and if the things themselves be never found but so combined, to talk of chance,—that is, of causes assumed to be irregular and indeterminate, producing an effect thus certain and definite, is contradictory, not merely to all experience, but almost to our very notion of the relation of cause and effect at all.

§ 10. For, in fact, in ascribing any particular effect either to design or chance, we can argue of those causes only from the knowledge which we have of their operation by experience. We have the experience of the effects of design in the works of human intelligence and contrivance; as we have that of what is called chance in the ordinary results of elemental action. Now these effects not only do not resemble each other in character, but are directly and specifically opposite; insomuch that the occurrence of the slightest and most momentary analogy between them, instantly begets in the mind a sense not only of surprise, but almost of disbelief; though the resemblance, we may add, at the most is found to reach to something of uniformity or regularity of shape, without approaching to the production of any thing like that nice disposition of reciprocating and counteracting parts which is involved in a machine. We repeat, then, to ascribe a certain uniform and periodical effect to any thing like chance, such as we know or can conceive of its operation, is to use the word either without meaning, or in a sense contradictory to its true one.

But may not an unintelligent cause be an uniform one, and thus produce a certain and uniform result? Certainly it may, and if these characters

were all that we had to account for, we should be at no greater loss, than we are in ascribing the phenomena of regular forms in crystals to certain original properties, or tendencies in the particles of which they are composed. These tendencies might be so various in their nature and operation, that it is not inconceivable that every distinct part of a watch, for instance, might be the result of certain processes of attraction, such as is supposed to dictate the configurations of matter in the case just mentioned; and metal, whether brass or steel, might be supposed to crystallize, as it were, into wheels, and chains, and springs, and balances. But giving the utmost scope for hypothesis in this respect, what law or tendency of the parts themselves could be supposed to bring them together in the precise number, size, shape, time and place wanted, so as to fit them for their action and counteraction upon each other, as we see to be the case in the watch? The cause of this, it is obvious, must be something external to any thing operating in the parts themselves; and even if it were conceivable, which it scarcely is, that unintelligent causes, such as we know to operate motion in matter, might, in the lapse of infinite ages, so concur, as to produce the combination in question; yet, as we have before said, if

we found not only *one* watch, but a regular and periodical succession of them, and if the parts in question were never met with but under precisely the same circumstances of combination, in which their various forms and aptitudes were fitted for the production of a particular result, to ascribe such a result to the operation of fortuitous causes, such as we know to produce the figures in the clouds, or the shapes of the pebbles on the sea-shore, after every allowance on the score of the infinitude of the possible combinations of infinite things, and the eternity in which they have to exhaust their incalculable permutations, leaves us just as remote as ever from any apprehension of the actual possibility of the phenomenon.

§ 11. It will, perhaps, be said, that if we can conceive matter to arrange itself unconsciously in a particular form, such as the spring of a watch for instance, can we not as well suppose it in the same way to produce the watch itself? A little consideration, we believe, will shew that this is impossible. The parts of the watch are many, and distinctly different in their character. It cannot therefore be any *one* principle or tendency, but twenty differing ones that can be supposed to produce them ; for to say that it may be the same

property of matter that produces the spring, the tendency of which actuates the formation of the case, is to abandon even that slight degree of intelligibility and consistency which may be allowed to the original hypothesis itself. Even admitting therefore, for a moment, this account of the production of the several parts of a machine, the difficulty will remain in its full force—what principle can be supposed so to limit and determine the operation of these various unconscious tendencies, as that they should never be found to take place, but under circumstances of time, place, position, and reciprocal connection, which are exactly necessary to enable them to constitute the machine which we see? The obvious, the necessary, the only possible answer to this is “Intelligence,”—intelligence existing independent of, and operating externally to the machine itself—an explanation, therefore, to which we are driven, not only by the accumulated analogies of all human experience, but by the absolute preclusion which is compelled by reason of any other that can be assigned.

§ 12. It has been observed, that, in speculating upon the origin of the present system of things, we are allowed but two alternatives of supposition ;—either the cause was intelligent

or unintelligent,—it is the fruit of design or chance.

May it not, it has been asked, have had no cause at all? The only sense which we can attach to this proposition is, that the world may have had no beginning; that is, may have existed as it is from eternity. To this Paley's answer is, (we give it in his own words,) "that the contrivance perceived in it proves that to be impossible. Nothing contrived can, in a strict and proper sense, be eternal; forasmuch as the contriver must have existed before the contrivance."

§ 13. That contrivance implies a contriver is clear; but this, as we have before had occasion to remark, is perhaps rather to assume the point in dispute, which would be more accurately stated, as questioning whether a system resembling, however perfectly, that which we know to be fruit of contrivance, might not have existed from eternity. If a thing, it may be said, can exist of itself, or from eternity, can any reason be urged why it should not bear one character of structure as well as another? Why it should not, for instance, be of a regular rather than an indeterminate shape? Why the energies informing it should not tend to periodical and symmetrical rather than eccentric

or incalculable exertion ? Why the matter of which it is composed might not, in some classes of cases, resemble those results which we distinguish by the name of effects of design, rather than others resulting from what we call unintelligent causes ? We ourselves, it may be added, with all our faculties, whether intellectual or animal, are but an infinitely small result of that eternal necessity which has thus determined our own as well as every other existence ; and it must be the highest presumption, in a creature so placed, to argue against the possibilities of that necessity, from the little distinctions of possible or impossible which his own limited experience has suggested. Things existing must exist in some form ; but it is impossible, *a priori*, and excluding all knowledge of their causes, to assign any ground for expecting any one rather than another ; and yet this possibility seems assumed in the assertion, that one form of matter may have existed from eternity, but that the other could not.

Eternity and infinity are ideas merely negative. When we say that something must have eternally existed, we merely mean that there never was a time when something was not : and may not that something have been always what we now see ? To contradict this supposition, you must be pre-

pared to affirm that this is impossible ; and that there has been a time when the present frame of things could not be. But can you do this ? Take any given period, however immensely remote from the present, and you will find it at least as easy to suppose this system to be then existing as any other you could substitute. The remoteness of time, though increased by all the powers of calculation, adds nothing at all to the difficulty. Although, therefore, we may not be prepared to explain directly how the world can have been from eternity ; or to meet all the embarrassments which necessarily attach to the consideration of a matter so much beyond our comprehension,—yet if, on the other hand, you can assign no period in the whole lapse of that eternity, when it may not have existed as well as it does now, our conclusions will be found to close in much the same admission of ignorance on both sides. That which may have been at any time, may have been at all times. All that we know or can know is, that things now are. How we are, or why we are, confessedly we know nothing. Supposing the system of things to have had a beginning, every part of it seems to bespeak intelligence in its cause ;—but we have no right, because there is no necessity for resorting to such an hypothesis, until it can be shewn

that, from the nature of things, the present world may not as well have existed from everlasting, as any thing else which you can suppose to have been in its place.

§ 14. Upon which reasoning we must first observe, that in denying the possibility of the eternity of the world, it is not at all necessary that we should be able to affirm that there never was a time when the present frame of things *could not be*: for it is admitted, that it can as easily be supposed to have existed six millions of centuries as sixty; but that *there must have been a time when it was not*, inasmuch as the nature and order of that frame of things irresistibly evinces that it had a *cause*, and therefore a *beginning*. It is not true, therefore, that what may have been at any time may have been at all times—since the supposition, as we have seen, by no means precludes the conclusion, that there must have been *some time* when it did not exist.

For the rest, we are not sure that Paley's answer does completely meet the difficulty suggested in the preceding section. Contrivance, or rather the marks of it in a thing, confessedly afford the strongest presumption against the supposition of an unintelligent cause; but, for the

reasons we have heard, I do not see that it equally concludes against the eternal or self-existence of such substances. Take the solar system, for instance; the beauty, the regularity, the evident *preferableness* to a thousand others that might have been adopted, of the present situation and movement of the planets and their respective satellites around the sun, sufficiently refute the supposition of such an arrangement having been the offspring of chance. But we cannot affirm that these circumstances, of themselves, stand in the way of the assertion, that the system may have existed as it is from eternity. If the heavenly bodies can have so existed at all, is any reason assignable why they should not have been as we see them—that is round, luminous, and moving at certain distances, periods, and directions—as well as of any other shape, size, and colour, or subject to any other laws of motion which you can devise?

Even if we urge that, admitting the eternity of organized matter as a *possibility*, the contrivances which it evinces must at least make it *probable*, that it had a contriver, and that, not what we see, but its Author, is that which has existed eternally; the answer will be, that this *probability* is founded solely on the same assumption—viz. on the *improbability* that matter which has

existed from eternity should bear one shape or structure rather than another ; which is the thing to be proved. Besides that, here, in granting the *possibility* of the eternal existence of matter seemingly organised, we admit all that can be required. For our adversaries do not dogmatise that matter has or must have so existed ; they would only say that we must by proof exclude this supposition before we can proceed to substitute any other.

§ 15. The true answer, I apprehend, is to be found, not so much in the apparent contrivances of the organic world, taken by themselves, as in that order of *succession* to which they are plainly subservient, and which immediately and necessarily depends upon them for its continuance. If to my question, What was the cause of the sun's existence ? a philosopher should answer, that it was self-existent, or had always existed ; I do not know that I could immediately shew the absurdity of the assertion. But suppose the question to relate to a *man*, and it is clear the same answer could not apply. For we know by experience, that neither had he always existed, nor was his existence without a distant and definite occasion, viz. the marriage of his parents.

If it should be contended that these were not so properly the *causes* as the *instruments* of the production in question, inasmuch as it resulted from peculiarities both of organization and propensity beyond the will of the agents; the answer would be to admit the point in dispute, since the very distinction of secondary or instrumental causes, supposes the necessity of primary or efficient ones. It still remains, indeed, to account for the existence of the father, and of the father's father—but this series cannot without absurdity be carried on for ever—for, as Clarke would say, if every link in the chain be dependent and limited, the whole cannot be self-existent or eternal. The whole, in fact, is and can be nothing in itself specifically different from the particulars of which it is made up.

§ 16. Some may perhaps argue, that Time, which is infinite, is nevertheless successive in its existence—that all existence in time is successive—that a series of generations may be considered only as a mode of existence of the same thing—that, for instance, supposing it were proved of the sun, that in the course of each year it consumed its entire substance, which, however, was by a principle of its constitution immediately sup-

plied, as fast as spent, from the surrounding atmosphere,—we might still speak of that luminary as eternally subsisting, though in reality no particle of the same identical matter was continued to it during two successive years.

For the two first of these cases it is sufficient to observe, (besides that time is rather an attribute or manner of existence than an existence or thing itself,) that neither time nor any individual thing existing in time, can be said to be *successive* in its existence, in the same sense that an animal that dies and is reproduced every day, year, or century, is so termed. It is not *time*, but the *parts* of time, that are properly said to be successive. Strictly speaking, succession supposes an actual difference in the subjects composing it; and therefore it cannot be said to belong to any one thing. One minute cannot be the same with that which it succeeds; nor one man; nor one note of music. Using the word *man* in the abstract, or generic sense, we may speak of him as existing in succession; but this is in reference rather to *ideas* than *things*. The race, which is of ideal creation, may so exist; but the animal, which alone is the thing, cannot. But they are *things* only which concern existence. In the case supposed of the constant renewal of the

substance of a body, we should say, though the parts were in change, yet that which properly constituted the sun—the principle of its nature, whereinsoever residing, which regulated the influx and efflux of particles, and controlled them to a certain modification or form, remained always the same, and therefore was not successive in its being. But one man, however minutely resembling his father, is no more the *same* thing with him, than with any other animal.

§ 17. But the question, it will be said, is not whether we can form any direct notion of an infinite series or succession of causes, but whether the supposition of such a series involves any contradiction; and, at any rate, whether it be more inconceivable in itself, than the eternal existence of any one being of the series.

It is true it would be absurd to resort to the supposition of such a succession by way of *accounting causatively* for the origin of any thing. Nor in this argument are we bound to shew how it can be in fact. It is enough for our purpose, if you are not able to shew that it is impossible in itself. An eternal-succession, you say, must be self-existent and necessary, and therefore cannot consist of parts in themselves depen-

dent and limited. We do not profess to shew that an eternal succession is, or to explain how it may be. All we know is, that a succession has taken place as far as the records of human observation extend, and we say that, for aught we know, it has always taken place, unless you can shew the supposition to be impossible. For the rest, we repeat, our knowledge of the conditions of necessary existence is so imperfect, that we can hardly take upon ourselves to dogmatize with confidence as to all the possibilities connected with it. If a necessary succession can be at all, it should seem that it must consist of dependent and limited natures; for it is the limitation and transitivity and mutual dependency of the particular beings, that constitutes the whole a succession.

§ 18. True,—and therefore this very remark suggests an obvious reason why a successive order of beings cannot from its very nature be termed a necessary or self-existent one.

The beings forming the succession are confessedly not necessary, and still less can the succession itself be considered so, for that clearly and immediately results from the constitution of the natures of which it is made up.

We will admit that the utility of any constitu-

tion of things does not necessarily evince that it was contrived for that purpose. If watches were dug out of the ground like diamonds, notwithstanding the exquisite adaptation of their structure to a particular use, still we could not *know* that that use was intended ; any more, perhaps, than we can infer that the gratification arising from the wearing of precious stones was the motive of their pellucidity and lustre. But in the case of a plant or animal, we cannot entertain even this degree of doubt respecting the intention of that part of its structure which we see was necessary for the continuance of the species. For it is not the *use* of the animal which is here concerned, but its very *existence* ; and not only is the capacity discovered, but the application of it is distinctly secured by a provision of instinct, bearing in the time and manner, and particularity of its operation, as evident marks of design, as the most refinedly mechanical portion of the material structure.

It is not, be it observed, that we see marks of design or adaptation in a system of things, such as the solar, of the immediate origin of which we otherwise know nothing ; but we trace the existence of the thing to a scheme of contrivance, which being certainly extraneous and previous to the plant and animal itself, is necessarily so to

every other individual of the succession, and therefore, to the whole succession also. To say of any particular plant, that it may have derived its being from the necessary and eternal constitution of its own nature, we know is not true; as it contradicts our positive knowledge of its origin in contrivances which did not belong to it. And it is perhaps still more unintelligible to speak of these contrivances as making a part of the animal as a *successive being*—for the existence of the succession is the direct and sole result of those contrivances. Once more, *succession* itself is nothing, and can account for nothing; being simply an *idea* existing in our minds, and derived from our observation of the manner in which certain classes of existences take place. To ascribe, therefore, those existences to a *principle of succession*, is strangely to invert the usual order of notion, by deriving things from ideas rather than ideas from things; and making our perception to be the *cause* of those existences, which are at the same time the objects of it.

In a word, I am at a loss to understand how we can affirm of any particular individual, such as a man, with the immediate source, ground, nature, and limits of whose existence, we are acquainted, that he may have been eternal, as we might of a

mountain or one of the heavenly bodies. We do not affirm this of the man, you say, nor even of the race, but of that constitution of things from which they necessarily result. If by this you mean the eternal cause or constituting principle, it is to concede the point in dispute; for any such, we have seen, must necessarily have existed previous to, and independent of, the being in question. Otherwise I can understand no signification of the constitution of a thing, as any thing separate from the thing itself.

§ 19. It is not, therefore, we would say, the simple perception of the marks of contrivance in the structure of a plant or animal, but our *experience of the fact*, that it immediately owes its being to a system of causes altogether external to itself, that at once excludes the supposition of its eternal existence. In fine, as every individual plant or animal must have had a beginning, the series or succession itself must, by a still stronger reason, have had one; since its existence (even in idea) is obviously posterior to that of the individuals of which it consists: and if that succession is clearly the result of a disposition of parts bearing the strongest possible marks of contrivance, the

presumption is irresistible, that its cause was not merely external but intelligent.

§ 20. Before we leave the subject, there is yet another of the difficulties which have been suggested with respect to it, upon which it may be as well to say a few words*. It has been urged that, in ascribing the frame and order of existing things to the exercise of certain attributes of intelligence and power in the Creator, we may be only indulging in an arbitrary assumption of our own. It is a part, no doubt, of our nature, that we can perceive ends, and employ means for their accomplishment; nor is the notion an unnatural one with a being not disposed to under-rate his own importance, that accounts for the structure of the universe upon the principles which he knows to operate in those contrivances which the preservation or convenience of his own being have suggested to him. But the imagination of a creative intelligence, in this sense, may be nothing more than an instance of the same prejudice which, among ruder nations, has clothed the Being thus supposed with a human form, and inspired

* See in particular Hume's Posthumous Dialogues upon Natural Religion, in which this topic is strongly insisted upon by one of the interlocutors.

him with human passions. Now the very *naturalness*, it may be said, of the analogy, together with the palpable temptations which our pride as well as our ignorance may have presented for its adoption, ought to suggest some mistrust of its possible foundation in truth. Our notions of creation can be drawn only from the experience of our own handiwork and contrivance, and the beings, the objects, the materials, are so different in the two cases, that it can hardly be safe to argue from one to the other.

§ 21. Upon which I would observe, that since it has not been attempted to shew that the analogy in question involves any thing either absurd or contradictory in itself, the mere *naturalness* of it, to use that expression, would seem to afford a presumption rather in favour of than against its truth. It is plain that reasoning purely *a priori*, there is at least as much of gratuitous assumption in the doctrine that would set aside this analogy, as one necessarily inapplicable; as in that which would adopt it. And if, therefore, the probability of it is forced upon us by other considerations, it would be in the highest degree unreasonable to exclude it from our speculation, upon a plea of ignorance, which does not more apply to the one

than to the other side of the controversy. The single question is, whether the supposition alluded to implies any thing impossible or contradictory in itself. If not, the very fact of our complete destitution of all previous knowledge in the matter, by depriving us of any other ground of speculation, seems only to give greater weight to the presumptions which mere analogy, however remote or inadequate, may be found to suggest.

It is true that, in arguing as to the probable nature of the divine attributes and purposes, from our experience of human motives and intelligence, we should always bear in mind the infinite difference between the two subjects. But this difference affects rather the *degree* than the *kind* of the attributes in question. And, indeed, as we cannot conceive of any moral or intellectual attribute otherwise than in reference to the experience of our own consciousness, to speak of any such as being specifically different in the Deity and in us, is really to use words without meaning. If the terms, wisdom, and power, and goodness, mean something else when applied to the Deity than their usual acceptation imports, they do in fact mean nothing. That which makes the conclusion of an intelligent cause from the contrivances observable in nature, so irresistible, is the exact, the

complete analogy which they present, with those adaptations of means to ends, which distinguish our own limited mechanics. The analogy, indeed, is so perfect, that I do not know whether the presumption to be drawn in respect of the identity, so to speak, of mind, not merely as to its essence, but to the order and manner of operation in us and in its source, has (so far from being pushed too far) been sufficiently insisted upon. It is impossible, indeed, to blame that sense of diffidence which shrinks from the presumption implied in such approximations ; but this feeling may be consulted too much ; for the more clear, distinct, and definite, we make our conceptions of the Deity, provided they be just, the more we fit them to operate effectually on our understanding and will.

At any rate, to argue that, since the Creator must be a Being so infinitely different from his creatures, that therefore intelligence and power, as well as every other attribute, as they exist in Him, must differ essentially from what they are in man, is absurd ; since it is only from the perception of the marks of power and intelligence precisely similar in kind to what we experience in ourselves, that we are justified in inferring the existence of such a Being at all. If the inference from those marks be unsound or uncertain, the question

is at an end. But to insist that the attributes we thus infer on the evidence merely of our experience, is something different from any thing that we have experienced, is plainly self-contradictory.

§ 22. It should seem, moreover, that unless there were something *common* in the divine and human nature, it would be impossible that the creature should ever know its Creator. Assume for a moment, that wisdom, or power and goodness, are specifically different in God and in us, and it is certain that the notion of such a Deity would be indistinguishable from the fate and chance of the Atheist. Nature would speak to us in a language unintelligible, and the word God become one of no real meaning to our apprehensions. It could neither assist our reason, nor operate upon our affections. Does not this consideration alone afford a strong presumption of the foundation of that analogy which mankind have ventured to assume? As rational and responsible creatures, it seems indispensable that we should not be ignorant of the most important of all our relations,—that in which we stand to our Maker; yet of that relation we can have no knowledge without some apprehension of his Being and attributes; and this knowledge again is impossible,

unless there be in that being and attributes something analogous to our own. In proportion, therefore, to the presumption that God would give us a knowledge so important, is the presumption that he would so constitute us as to be able to attain to it ; and this probability, whatever be its force, is I think clearly equal to that of any argument which our adversaries can adduce against our possessing such knowledge, from the antecedent improbability that the nature of a creature like man should have any thing analogous to that of a Being so infinitely superior.

There is, therefore, we conceive, nothing either absurd or presumptuous in the assumption, that mind in man bears a direct analogy with mind in his Maker ; since, in recognizing that analogy, and in drawing from it the proper inferences, he is precisely making that use of reason, for which especially it was given to him.

§ 23. With respect to the analogy itself, it is as close and perfect as any that can be imagined. Of the contrivances of the natural world, some no doubt are on a scale too vast for our comprehension ; others of proportions too minute for our optics ; but of such as come more properly within our sphere of speculation, in the structure of ourselves,

and of the animal and vegetable creation, there are few of which we cannot perfectly appreciate both the process and the principle, in their accurate resemblance to, not to say identity with, those of which human ingenuity has availed itself, in the accomplishment of its own independent purposes. Nor does the coincidence extend merely to the *principle* resorted to, but equally prevails in the manner of its application; for it is not merely the general uses of the animal which are met; but contingent exigencies are specially provided for by a particular contrivance, and defects and difficulties incident to the accomplishment of conflicting purposes are obviated by provisions of an adscititious or compensatory nature. There is in these processes the vestige of an order of ideas so precisely similar to that which occurs in the elaboration of the works of human ingenuity, that, perhaps, it befits us rather to limit the sense of analogy which is thus forced on the mind, than to press it to what, considering this part of the subject in itself, might otherwise seem its legitimate consequences.

Nay, we are not sure that it would be too much to affirm, that of the contrivances themselves, taken individually, there are scarcely any to which, as far as the *principle of construction*

is concerned, we might not oppose some results of human ingenuity. It is the exquisite nicety of the workmanship,—the perfect simplicity, yet completeness of the provision—above all the incalculable variety and number of them, and the unerring precision by which they are often made to co-operate, without confusion or interruption, for the accomplishment of a common end, which chiefly compel our astonishment, and of course make all comparison, if any such should be instituted, altogether absurd. But still, all this may be said to mark nothing differing in the *kind* of intelligence exercised in the two cases. Thus, in the structure of the human body, infinite and admirable as are the contrivances, I do not know that there is a single one yet discovered which, the object and the materials being given, we could not conceive human ingenuity as being able to combine of itself.

§ 23. We have a right then—or rather we are bound—it is intended, that we should infer intelligence in the cause of things, meaning by intelligence precisely what we do when we apply that term to human understandings. And in the same way, I apprehend we must restrict the inference as to the *power* which we suppose as residing in the

Deity, by a similar reference to our own experience. The only kind of power of which we can conceive, is that which we ourselves exercise, whether in the ordering of our ideas, or the communication or arrest of motion in matter. The power involved in the *creation*, whether of matter or spirit, where no substance existed before, is distinct from any that we have experienced in ourselves, and one of the nature and operation of which we can form no conception. The grounds, therefore, upon which we are led to ascribe it to the Deity, are totally distinct from those upon which we have hitherto been arguing, and are to be found in the synthetical or *a priori* method of demonstration alone.



APPENDIX.



APPENDIX.

Note A. p. 24.

MR. LOCKE's account of the grounds of assurance which we have for the *reality* of our knowledge is very unsatisfactory. The 4th chapter of his Fourth Book is devoted to this topic :—"As the mind," he observes, "knows things not immediately, but only by the intervention of the ideas which it has of them, our knowledge is only real as far as there is a conformity between our ideas and the things they stand for." But what, it may be asked, shall be the criterion of this conformity ?

He admits the difficulty of the matter, but contends that there are two sorts of ideas, which we may be assured agree with things. The first are simple ideas, "which, as the mind can by no means make to itself, must necessarily be the product of things operating on the mind, in a natural way, and producing therein those perceptions which, by the wisdom and will of our Maker, they are adapted to do. They have, therefore, all the conformity to things which our state requires, for they represent them unto us under those appearances which they are fitted to produce in us." All this, we may ob-

serve, he says, necessarily follows from the fact, that the mind cannot make its own simple ideas. That such a fact may evince, that our simple ideas must have some external cause, may be admitted (though as causation or power is itself among the number, even that may seem doubtful), but it does not appear in what manner it can imply any thing whatever as to the actual nature of that cause, still less of its necessary conformity with our ideas.

Of the second sort of ideas, which he says agree with things, we do not exactly apprehend what is the kind of reality which he wishes to affirm. This class consists of all our complex ideas, except those of substances. "These," he says, "being archetypes of the mind's own making, not intended to be the copies of any thing, nor referred to the existence of any thing as to their originals, cannot want any conformity necessary to real knowledge, so that we cannot but be infallibly certain that all the knowledge we attain concerning these ideas is real, because in all our thoughts and reasonings of this kind, we intend things no further than as they are conformable to our ideas." Of this class are all our moral as well as mathematical ideas, which being archetypes in themselves, are necessarily adequate and complete, and afford as such, in their perception, the grounds of certain knowledge.

Mr. Locke seems here to be confounding the reality, or rather the certainty of our knowledge, with the reality of the objects of it. Knowledge he had defined to consist in the perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas. The objection is, not that we cannot certainly perceive that agreement or disagreement, and so far

attain certain knowledge, but that it follows from this definition itself, that we can never have any knowledge of any thing beyond our ideas, and can never therefore know whether the connexions or relations we perceive between them have any correspondency with those existing among things themselves.

Our ideas of substances, Mr. Locke admits, being referred to archetypes without us, may differ from them, and so our knowledge of them come short of being real. But so far as they agree with those archetypes, of which they are supposed copies, so far he contends our knowledge concerning them is real. And this reality, he says, consists in this, that all our complex ideas of substances must be such and such only as are made up of such simple ones as have been discovered to co-exist in nature; and our ideas being thus true, though not perhaps very exact copies, are yet the subjects of real, as far as we have any, knowledge of them.

So far as our ideas agree with their archetypes without, so far it must be allowed our knowledge of those archetypes, derived through our ideas of them, may be called real. But it is admitted that our ideas may differ from them, and as Locke has given us no criterion, whereby we may judge of the degrees of that difference, how can we know that they may not differ altogether? Nay, what reason have we to apprehend that they agree at all? Berkeley, we know, has contended not merely that we have no reason to suppose such agreement, but that if we reflect we shall find it impossible that any unperceived quality of body can bear the remotest resemblance to the idea of it in our minds.

The whole of Locke's doctrine in this matter seems included in the following sentence of his, § 12, "Whatever ideas we have, the agreement we find they have with others will still be knowledge. If those ideas be abstract, it will be general knowledge. But to make it real concerning substances, the ideas must be taken from the real existence of things."

Our knowledge, Locke had told us, is only so far real, as there is a conformity between our ideas and the reality of things. But what is the criterion of this conformity in the case of substances? He answers, "that our ideas of them be taken from the reality of things;" a method of solution not calculated materially to relieve our embarrassment.

It is plain, indeed, that as there must be some cause for the production of those simple ideas, which we feel we cannot produce ourselves, so must there be for those combinations of simple ideas which we call substances, and which are distinguishable from those innumerable others which we can frame in our own minds. This circumstance affords a sufficient ground of distinction between the two classes of ideas; if, according to Locke's language and doctrine, they are both equally to be considered as such; and we may call the one ideas of perception, and the other, of imagination. But as long as the object of knowledge in both cases is considered as residing purely in the mind, the distinction affords no reason whatever why we should ascribe to either any analogy or resemblance with things existing without.

What was Locke's real opinion in this matter, it is difficult to ascertain; so loose, and in fact contradictory, is

his use of the term *idea* throughout the whole work. The only intelligible construction of his doctrine is that which we have seen ; viz. that the sole objects of the understanding are its own ideas, and that it knows nothing but by their intervention. The idealism of Berkeley not only followed from this doctrine, but was in fact the only rational and consistent statement of it ; and the Bishop was perfectly justified in affirming, that upon this supposition the notion of the existence of a material world, according to the ordinary conception of it, was not only unproved but absurd.

Note B. p. 28.

In the 17th chapter of his Fourth Book, which treats of *reason*, Mr. Locke states that he intends that word “ to stand for the faculty whereby man is supposed to be distinguished from beasts, and wherein it is evident he much surpasses them.” This definition, or rather description, is somewhat vague ; nor is it easy to collect from what follows in the 2nd and 3rd sections, which contain his whole doctrine on the subject, any very precise or consistent notion of the meaning he attached to the term.

In the first place, he suggests a difficulty, which he says may be urged against his treating of reason at all. “ If general knowledge, as has been shewn, consists in a perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas, and the knowledge of the existence of all things without us be only from our senses, what room is there for the exercise of any other faculty, but outward sense and inward perception ? What need is there of *reason* ?” He

answers "Very much, both for the enlargement of our knowledge and the regulating our assent. For it has to do both in knowledge and opinion, and is necessary and assisting to all our other intellectual faculties, and indeed contains two of them,—viz. sagacity and illation."

It is plain, both from the difficulty here suggested, and the answer to it, that Locke distinguishes reason from that faculty in us, whereby we perceive the agreement or disagreement of our ideas, and that he merely understands by it what is called *reasoning*,—viz. "that power by which the mind both finds out and so orders the intermediate ideas, as to perceive the connexion of the two extremes." "This," he adds, "is what we call *illation* or inference, and consists in nothing but the perception of the connexion there is between the ideas in each step of the deduction, whereby the mind comes to see their agreement or disagreement."

It is obvious to remark, that reasoning, as it is here described, is rather a *process* than a *power* or *faculty* of the mind. Moreover, this power or process of illation, what is it? It "consists in nothing but the perception of the connexion there is between the ideas of each step of the deduction." But this perception, which Locke elsewhere tells us is intuitive, he has already distinguished from reason properly so called.

His subsequent explanations tend still further to darken the matter. "Sense and intuition," he says, "reach but a very little way. The greatest part of our knowledge depends upon deduction and intermediate ideas; and in both cases, whether of assent or knowledge, the faculty which finds out the means and rightly

applies them, to discover certainty in the one and probability in the other, is that which we call reason."

Here again intuition is distinguished from reason, which is plainly defined to be the power whereby the mind invents and applies those intermediate steps, which are necessary for the deduction of truths not intuitive; and as the perception of the connexion between any two steps of that deduction is admitted to be intuitive, it should follow that it is not properly the act of reason. And yet, in apparent contradiction to this, it is immediately added. "For as reason perceives the necessary and indubitable connexion of all the ideas and proofs one to another, in each step of any demonstration that produces knowledge, so it likewise perceives the probable connexion of all the ideas and proofs one to another, in every step of a discourse to which it will think assent due."

Mr. Locke subjoins the following as a summary of his doctrine, "so that we may in reason consider these four degrees;—the first and highest is the discovering and finding out of *truths**; the second, the regular and methodical disposition of them, and laying them in a clear order to make their connexion and force be plainly and easily perceived; the third, is the perceiving their connexion; and the fourth, and making a right conclusion." That *reason* does all this may be admitted, but surely not in the sense to which Mr. Locke had seemed previously to restrict the sense of the word.

* This seems a misprint for *proofs*.

Note C. p. 35.

Locke has observed, Book IV. chap. 3, that "the notice of external things which we have by our senses, though it be not altogether so certain as our intuitive knowledge, or the deductions of our reason employed about the clear abstract ideas of our own minds, is yet an assurance that deserves the name of knowledge." Upon which Reid remarks, that upon the principle of Locke's own distinction between knowledge and belief, it as well deserves that of belief. And so indeed it should seem; and yet, as we certainly apply the term knowledge to the information derived through our senses, the subject is one that merits consideration.

With this view, it might not perhaps be impertinent to ask what it is that we say that we know in these cases? Is it any thing but the perception or recollection itself? The truth or accuracy of which is necessarily supposed in every affirmation which we make respecting them. I see a tree;—this I say that I know. To contradict this, it is not enough to say that there may be no such thing as a tree, but that I do *not* see a tree, which my consciousness assures me is not true. If, indeed, you ask me how do I know that my senses do not deceive in this case, as they appear to do in some others, I can only say that I believe that they do not, for I admit that I have nothing but *probabilities* to urge against the supposition.

But waving this; it will perhaps be found, upon a more accurate investigation, that our perceptions of external existence are in the strictest sense the grounds of *knowledge*, as certain and necessary as that which we

possess of any existence or relation, the most abstract possible. From certain sensations which arise in the mind, and certain consciousness of its own volitions, the mind concludes the external and present existence of something solid, extended, figured, moveable; and these form its *idea* of the thing; which is all that we know of it: and which being merely an act or inference of reason, cannot possibly exist elsewhere than in the mind itself. But though this idea be said to exist in the mind, it is not to be understood as any thing distinct from the mind, and forming, as it were, an *object* of the mind's perception or knowledge. It is simply the *act* of the mind so perceiving—the proper and only *object* of which, after all, is the external thing itself which exists without.

Our notion of (external) existence is in fact exclusively derived from perception. A thief walking in the dark finds his progress suddenly arrested. He at once concludes that there *is* or *exists* something external to and independent of himself which stands in his way; and in applying his hand to discover what it is, he necessarily ascribes to that existence the several qualities of solid, extended, figured, &c. which the examination of it suggests.

A conviction of the present existence of the object, therefore, does not so properly, according to Reid's statement, *accompany* the act of conception, as it is *involved* in it. To perceive a thing is to know it exists. It is, in fact, a contradiction to say, that what we perceive does not exist; since perception, implying a *conclusion* of the existence of the object, the supposi-

tion, that at the same time that object may not be, is absurd.

May we not be mistaken in that or any other conclusion? We can understand what is meant by the proposition of such a doubt; but we cannot, even for a moment, really entertain it. When, on pressing my hand against a wall, from the sensation of obstruction I conclude, that *something* resists my pressure, or that which resists my pressure is a thing or existence—can I be mistaken in my conclusion? Is not the certainty of it implied in the very meaning of the terms I use; which, if we let go, all notion of this or any other proposition becomes unintelligible. In this case, to deny my conclusion is to say that *nothing* resists my pressure; that is, that my pressure is not resisted; which, in the case supposed, is to contradict the evidence of that consciousness upon which I depend for the knowledge even of my own as well as other existences.

It is not merely that my *ideas* of the thing must necessarily exist—which has often been said. My idea of it is nothing but my perception; that is, the act of my mind perceiving it: to ascribe existence to which, (as distinguished from my own existence) is in reality an abuse of the word. The acts of my mind are merely my mind acting in such and such a way; and as such, they cannot of course be conceived as existing separate from or independent of the mind itself.

I think too it will be found, that we have the same ground of certainty for all our other notions respecting the existence of the pecuniary or tangible properties of

bodies. For these are all equally conclusions of reason, the certainty of which is involved in the very meaning of the words we use to express them.

With respect to sight, it has been doubted whether we could attain the notion of external existence from the perceptions of that sense alone. The common opinion, however, is, that we see as well as touch things, and the common opinion is probably right. It is apparently the perception of *figure* that, in this case, compels the conclusion of something existing without the mind ; and this I am inclined to think it does by suggesting the idea of *extension*, a quality of which the mind, by the necessary consciousness of its own nature and essence, may know at once that it cannot belong to itself. Colour alone, we may remark, would not suggest this notion, any more than would sound or fragrance. A person in the dark or in a mist, or looking up to an unclouded sky, sees nothing. It is the perception of form—that is, of colour as determined by figure—which at once leads the mind to conclude there is something without.

Note D. p. 89.

In these enquiries we must be always careful to distinguish between perception and sensation. Perception, as distinguished from sensation, seems exclusively an act of the understanding. Thus, in the case of sight, the proper object or subject of sensation is certainly not the external object, but the affection of colour which, by the mediation of light, that object produces. The vibrations

of the optic nerve produce the sense of colour, as those of the olfactory do that of smell, and of hearing, sound. These sensations, of course, can have no conceivable resemblance to the vibrations themselves, or to any thing in the external object which occasions them. They are purely mental affections, such as pain or pleasure, and therefore cannot possibly exist otherwise than in a mind. The mind, again, does not properly *perceive*, but feels them; and, by the exercise of its cognosciture or rational power upon that fact, perceives (i. e. infers?) both the existence and nature of the external object by which they are produced.

The doctrine, perhaps, would receive a clearer illustration, if considered in respect of the manner we acquire ideas through the sense of *touch*. The sensation of touch alone, when another body of the same temperature, a billiard ball for instance, comes gently in contact with our hand, does not afford us any idea of body, or of external existence at all. The feeling itself is undistinguishable from that which arises from any internal affection of the part. The case is distinctly different when holding a billiard-ball in my hand I press it with my fingers. This at once suggests the idea of *resistance*, and therefore of external existence; of extension and figure; and it will be found, I think, on a very slight reflection, that every one of these are *conclusions* of my reason upon the experiment of my own sensations. That they are such appears further from the fact, that they are all susceptible of definition. Accordingly, we do not feel them but *know* them; and from that know-

ledge can argue as to all their infinitely possible relations. And these clearly make up our whole idea of body, as perceived by touch only, into which the sensation itself enters not at all; for the prejudice which, in the case of sight, ascribes the sensation to the object, does not in any degree operate here. And if so, equally plain is it, that our idea of matter, as acquired by touch, is purely an intellectual entity; a conclusion of the understanding. What is the case with a man born blind? It is certain he can have no *image*, properly so called, of extension; his idea, therefore, of body, can only consist of the knowledge he has of its properties and relations, every one of which he can describe; i. e. explain what he means by it: being, as they are, strictly creatures of the mind, not suggested by any arbitrary connection with the sensation itself, but necessarily inferred from the information supplied by the mind's own consciousness.

What the mind immediately feels, therefore, are its own *sensations*, which result from the laws, inexplicable and inconceivable to us, of its union with the body. What it *perceives* are the causality, the externality, the figure, and extension of that which produces the sensations. These form our *idea* of the thing, which is purely a rational entity, and as such, is rather the subject than the object of the mind's knowledge. This is the distinction between sensation and idea, between feeling and knowing, which Mallebranche perceived so clearly, and upon which he insists so uniformly and strongly. Indeed, nothing can be more just than the analysis which that philosopher makes of perception, into sensation and

pure idea; and equally so was his doctrine, that this last could not possibly be a modality of the mind in the sense in which sensation itself is so. His material error was in not observing that our ideas exist in the mind, not objectively, but subjectively; that they are not the *object* of perception, but the *act* of perception, and that his adversary Arnauld was so far right in pronouncing these (viz. the idea and the act of perception) to be the same thing; though he seems to have entertained but a very confused and inadequate notion of what either of them in themselves really are. It was this mistake of considering ideas as the objects of perception, and consequently as existing separately from it, which led Mallebranche into the supposition of their existing in the mind of God. A notion which sounds so strange in itself, and of which, in the nature of things, he was never able to give any consistent explanation; but the use and purpose of which we at least understand better when we come to see the nature of the difficulty which suggested it. He saw plainly and truly that our idea of extension was no part of sensation; that they differed essentially and specifically; and that although the laws of the union of mind and body would sufficiently account for the sensation of colour which arises in the soul on looking at any object, it in no degree explained the simultaneous occurrence of the idea of extension. How then he asked do we perceive extension? After rejecting every other hypothesis as inadequate, he conceived that he had found at least a more probable solution in the consideration that this idea must exist in the divine mind; being that upon

which all things had been created ; and that since God is intimately present to our souls, inasmuch as in Him "they live and move and have their being," it is conceivable that he should be pleased to discover to our minds that which exists in his ; the sensations, operated by external bodies, serving as *occasions* for this kind of *natural revelation*, as he terms it.

The difficulties and inconsistencies which attend this supposition are palpable. I persuade myself that the profound author would have avoided them, had it occurred to him to consider our ideas in the point of view which has just been suggested ; viz. as the intuitive conclusions of our reason operating upon our sensations. Upon this principle, the extension we perceive is indeed in one sense a *real*, as in another, it may be called an *intelligible extension*. It is an *intelligible extension*, since that which is immediately present to the mind, is the mind's own conclusion that such an extension must be ; which very conclusion implies the being of a *real extension*, or rather *thing extended*, existing, if it exist at all, *external* to, and independently of the mind perceiving it. As an *intelligible extension*, it is only the act of the mind perceiving it ; as a *real extension*, it is the thing itself understood.

We shall merely add, that the above view of the subject would seem perfectly to remove all the difficulties respecting the identity of the tangible and visible extension of bodies, upon which Berkeley dwells so forcibly in his *Essay on Vision*, and from which indeed he deduces his most cogent arguments for the necessity of his ideal hypo-

thesis—and moreover, that it equally removes the grounds upon which the same philosopher had contended for the impossibility of our framing *abstract ideas*; for, if true, it should follow not only that such are possible, but that in fact all our ideas (properly understood) are equally and essentially abstract.

THE END.

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AN
ENQUIRY
INTO
THE DOCTRINES (2)
OF
NECESSITY AND PREDESTINATION.
IN
FOUR DISCOURSES
PREACHED BEFORE
THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD.
WITH NOTES,
AND
AN APPENDIX
ON THE
SEVENTEENTH ARTICLE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. ✓

BY
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Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra.

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P R E F A C E.



A SMALL treatise by the late Mr. Dawson of Sedbergh, published about twenty years ago, suggested to me the leading argument of the **FIRST** of these Discourses. It is entitled ‘The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity briefly ‘invalidated.’ The author lays down three axioms, as the foundation of his reasoning.

I. ‘If we make a false supposition, and
‘reason justly from it, a contradiction or
‘absurdity will be contained in the con-
‘clusion.’

II. ‘Every action or exertion vo-
‘luntarily made is with a design, or in
‘hopes of obtaining some end.’

III. 'All practical principles must
 ' either be founded in truth, or believed
 ' to be so for the moment that they
 ' operate.'

From these premises he infers that where the doctrine of necessity is firmly believed, and made use of as a practical principle, *motives cease to operate*. Assuming then that in a future state our faculties will be enlarged, our understandings enlightened, and our apprehensions quickened, he concludes that a continual progress in knowledge must at length terminate in absolute inactivity: and this conclusion, that *activity*, which throughout nature is observed to accompany *intelligence*, should be destroyed by the rational faculties being enlarged, he justly thinks is so paradoxical, as to throw much discredit on the principle from which it is by fair reasoning deduced.

It was perhaps not the most judicious



mode of applying the argument, to suppose the case of *another state* of intellectual progress, in order to exemplify it in its full force. For that is, to assume more conditions than are necessary—and those conditions all open to cavil or objection. It is quite enough for the conclusion aimed at, to apply the argument to human nature *as it actually is*; and the conclusion thus deduced is sufficiently absurd to overthrow the hypothesis.

The developement of this principle so applied is attempted in the earlier part of the **FIRST Discourse**. But besides this, as an argument of equal authority, and as one *concurrent* in its application, it appeared to me that the *moral* consequences of the hypothesis in question might also be pursued: for the notion of a *moral* agent gifted with mental powers, the *improvement* of which naturally tends to the weakening or the extinction of moral principle, is an absurdity

similar to the former, and equally conclusive against the truth of the supposition from which it flows—a method of reasoning which I do not recollect to have seen adopted by any writer on a continued plan, although nothing is more common than an occasional reference to the topic, that the theory of necessity excludes the ideas of right and wrong. The establishment of these positions forms the main business of the **FIRST DISCOURSE**.

In the **SECOND DISCOURSE** the difficulties arising out of the belief in a superintending *Providence*, as compatible with the *Free-will* of man, are considered. This question is intimately connected with that concerning the *origin of evil*. *Why* evil exists, is undoubtedly mysterious. But we know it *does* exist. Any reasoning therefore which proceeds on the absence of evil from the universe we have nothing to do with. But assuming such

a mixed constitution of things as actually exists, the great principles of natural religion become intelligible. Without evil, actual or possible, without uncertainty, without the consciousness that *much* depends on ourselves, there could be no trial, no exercise of virtue, no trust in Providence. As on the one hand, if there were *no* settled order of things, we should be at a loss for any principles of action; so on the other, if *every thing* were understood to be settled and fixed beforehand, there would be no occasion for vigilance or foresight, or for prayer. Reason then teaches us that principles of *both kinds* must be admitted, viz. 1. That God foreknows all things; and yet that he deals with man as if future events were contingent in their nature. 2. That God's providence controls the order of events; and yet that man is free to choose and to act. Each proposition is separately demonstrable: they are not *contradictory*, and yet their *congruity* may be *inconceivable*.

Whatever is thus proved of *natural* religion, is applicable by ANALOGY to *revealed*. The *difficulties* and *apparent incongruities* which belong to the one, we ought to expect to find also in the other, as they profess to come from the same author. We should regard them therefore in the case of revealed religion, not as *objections* to its credibility, but as *evidences* of its truth.

In the THIRD Discourse, this mode of reasoning is *transferred* to the Calvinistic doctrine of Predestination. If there be in natural religion two fundamental propositions, both *true* and both *intelligible*, separately taken, we cannot be surprised to find each of these truths distinctly recognized and confirmed in Scripture; and it is unreasonable to expect that one should be so propounded as to *exclude* the other.

Much of the error and perplexity attending these enquiries is shewn to pro-

ceed from a wrong use made of Scripture language : for God is not revealed to us in Scripture as he is *absolutely*, but as he is *relatively* to ourselves. Archbishop King's rule of analogical interpretation is here recommended : and in a NOTE subjoined to this Discourse a full account is given of the Archbishop's argument in his Sermon on Predestination and Foreknowledge ; together with a general dissertation upon the mode of reasoning by analogy, and an examination of the objections brought against this principle of interpreting Scripture.

The FOURTH Discourse enters upon the main subject of the Calvinistic controversy, viz. *whether there be few that be saved*—and *whether each man's destiny is to be regarded as settled from all eternity*. The doctrine of the Church of England upon these points is shewn to be agreeable to Scripture, and to be

delivered in a manner conformable to the principles maintained in this Enquiry: that is, each of those truths which the opposite parties espouse as their creed, is declared to be contained in Scripture, without attempting to explain their union, and without permitting one to obliterate the other.

In the course of this argument frequent mention is made of the *equivocal use of words*, as the great source of error among men. Nothing is more common with argumentative writers than this remark; and yet the full extent of its importance does not seem to be understood, even by those who are aware of its truth: for it continually happens that the same writer who has laid down the caution most distinctly, and has employed it in the solution of a proposed difficulty, is guilty of the fault himself in the next page. It is most common too in treating of those subjects, where it is most neces-

sary to guard against it, I mean in metaphysical enquiries; for in these, there being no sensible object to correct our misapprehensions, every thing depends upon the meaning of the words: and if this meaning be in the slightest degree changed, and the change escapes our notice, it is mere matter of chance whether our conclusions are true or false. It is also to be observed, that the more *familiar* the words are about which the question turns, the more liable are we to be deceived by their ambiguity; because they not only excite less attention, but men are unwilling to suppose it possible that they should not exactly understand expressions which are so well established in use, and which are in every one's mouth.

An example of this error is produced in the First Discourse, in the use of the word *true*. People are not aware of the laxity with which this word is employed. We speak of a *true man*, a *true maxim*,

a *true line*, a *true representation*, a *true diamond*, a *true report*, without suspecting that in each case the word bears a different sense. For by such phrases is meant an *honest* man, a *reasonable* maxim, a *perfect* line, an *accurate* representation, a *real* diamond, a *faithful* report. However slight the shade of difference may be, it is perhaps essential to the point under consideration; and the more subtle the enquiry is upon which we are engaged, the more likely is it that some nice discrimination may be necessary. Thus in the question concerning the *certainty* of future events, which the Stoics used to infer from the necessity of the *truth or falsehood* of the proposition which predicts them, in order to shew the fallacy of this argument it becomes necessary to define exactly the sense in which *truth* is used when we speak of a *true proposition*. And if it be found to mean, what all accurate writers define it to be, the agreement of a *representation*

with the *thing represented*, there must be some *thing* previously existing, before this idea of truth can be entertained at all. ‘*Propositio vera* QUOD RES EST ‘*dicit.*’ The original must be antecedent to the representation. An assertion therefore respecting the *future* may be probable or improbable, it may be honest or deceitful, it may be prudent or rash, it may have any relation we please to the mind of the person who makes it or of him who hears it, but it can have no relation at all to a thing which *is not*. Any reasoning therefore which assumes it to bear this sense, which really does not and which in fact cannot belong to it, is illusory. It turns merely upon the equivocation of a word.

If this method were rigidly pursued with all the terms most commonly employed in abstract reasoning, it would tend to abridge many a useless and to settle many a mischievous controversy. It is the key to a thousand errors which

have abused mankind under the false name of philosophy ; and nothing, I believe, would tend more to the advancement of knowledge than such an enquiry into the use of words ; because the same vigour of mind which is now often strained and baffled in contending with imaginary difficulties, would then be exerted in a right direction, or at least would not be spent in vain. Something of this kind I hope hereafter to be able to execute, not however without apprehension of incurring the displeasure of those who, if my speculations are well-founded, will appear to have lost their time in logomachy, and to have wasted their strength in endeavouring to grasp a phantom, or in fighting the air.



DISCOURSE I.



ACTS XV. 18.

KNOWN UNTO GOD ARE ALL HIS WORKS, FROM THE
BEGINNING OF THE WORLD.

NEXT to the idea of *power* in the supreme Being, that of his perfect *knowledge* of all that is doing in the world seems to be the first that arises in the mind of man, however undisciplined and uninstructed, even before any tolerable conception of what we call his moral attributes is formed. The most ignorant person, who talks of God's *seeing* every thing, and *hearing* every thing, never for a moment imagines that he sees and hears by such organs as we possess ; or that the use of those faculties can be impeded in him as it often is in ourselves ; that any thing, for

instance, can be hid from him, or come upon him by surprise, or be dimly and confusedly discovered. Whatever he knows, he knows perfectly: and although it is ~~some~~ improvement upon this idea, to conceive him knowing things *beforehand*, yet since human wisdom arrives often at such a degree of certainty about future events, that for all the purposes of life our foreknowledge is as much to be depended upon as our actual knowledge, as, for instance, that the sun will rise to-morrow—that the tide will ebb and flow at a given time—since, I say, experience teaches us this of ourselves, it is no violent step, but a natural and easy transition, to attribute this faculty in a much higher degree to God—or rather to conceive it as existing in him without any limitation at all. The more general statement indeed, that God does not exist in *time* but in eternity, and therefore that there is no room for the ideas *before* and *after* when speaking of *him*, and that the succession of events cannot to such a Being make any difference, is perhaps beyond the reach of minds not ac-

customed to such abstraction: but the plainest and most unpractised thinker will find no difficulty in allowing, that God must see into futurity better than man can see; as one man sees better than another according to the strength of his faculties, and his superior acquaintance with the constitution of the universe: and if we assign these qualities without measure or limitation to God, what measure or limitation can it be reasonable to impose upon that foreknowledge which arises out of them?

Accordingly it may be observed, that one of the earliest religious practices of rude nations is to consult the Deity about that which is to come: plainly implying that foresight, which is the strongest evidence of superiority among men, must belong to God in a far more eminent degree. The counsel of Abitophel was (the sacred historian observes) "as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God."

The course indeed of the *material* world seems to proceed upon such fixed and uniform laws, that short experience joined to

close attention is sufficient to enable a man, for all useful purposes, to anticipate the general result of causes now in action. In the *moral* world much greater uncertainty exists. Every one feels that what depends upon the conduct of his fellow-creatures is less certain than what is to be brought about by the agency of the laws of matter: and yet even here, since man is a being of a certain composition, having such and such faculties, inclinations, affections, desires, and appetites, it is very possible for those who study his nature attentively, especially for those who have practical experience of any individual or of any community of men, to foretell how they will be affected, and how they will act under any supposed circumstances. The same power (in an unlimited degree as before) it is natural and reasonable to ascribe to that Being, who excels the wisest of us infinitely more than the wisest of us excels his fellow-creatures:

It never enters the mind of a person who reflects in this way, that his anticipation of

another's conduct lays any restraint upon that man's conduct when he comes to act. The anticipation indeed is relative to himself, not to the other. If it affected *him* in the remotest degree, his conduct would vary in proportion to the strength of the conviction in the mind of the thinker that he will so act. But no man really believes in this magical sympathy. No man supposes the *certainty* of the *event* (to use a common but as I conceive an improper term) to correspond at all with the *certainty of him* who foretels or expects it. In fact every day's experience shews, that men are deceived in the event, even when they regarded themselves as most certain, and when they would readily have used the strongest phrases to denote that certainty, not from any intention to deceive, but from an honest persuasion that such an event must happen. How is it then? God can never be deceived—his knowledge therefore is always accompanied or followed by the event—and yet if we get an idea of what *his* knowledge is, by our own, why should we regard it as dragging the event along with it, when in our own case we ac-

knowledge the two things to have no connection^a?

But here the advocate for necessity interposes, and says, True, *your* knowledge does not affect the event, over which you have no power: but God, who is all-powerful, who *made* all things as they are, and who *knows* all that will come to pass, must be regarded as rendering that *necessary* which he foreknows—just as even you may be considered accessory to the event which you anticipate, exactly in proportion to the share you have had in preparing the instruments or forming the minds of those who are to bring it about.

To this I answer, that the connection between *knowledge* and the *event* is not at all established by this argument. It is not because I *knew* what would follow, but because I *contributed towards it*, that it is influenced by me. You may if you please contend, that because God made every thing, therefore all things that happen are done by him. This is taking another ground for the

^a See note at the end of this Discourse.

doctrine of necessity, which will be considered presently. All I maintain now is, that the notion of God's *foreknowledge* ought not to interfere in the slightest degree with our belief in the *contingency* of events, and the *freedom* of human actions. The confusion has, I conceive, arisen chiefly from the ambiguity of the word *certainly*, used as it is even by learned writers, both in its relation to the mind which thinks, and to the object about which it is thinking^b.

Let us now attend to the graver question, whether because God made the world and all things in it, therefore every thing that happens, human conduct as well as the rest, must be regarded as proceeding from him, and determined beforehand by his direction, in all its detail. Whatever has been, is, or will be, could not, as some say, be otherwise. We, vain and insignificant creatures, full of our own importance, imagine that we act from ourselves, that we can deliberate, choose, reject, command, obey, forbid, con-

^b See Tucker, vol. iv. chap. 26, on Free Will.

trive, hasten or hinder a thousand things, when in fact this is all delusion—all the creation of our own fancy. We are but members of the machine, like the rest ; and though we may please ourselves with thinking that we act an independent part, the real truth is, we have no voice, no power, no control in what is going on—all would take its course just the same, whether for good or for ill, were we to give ourselves no concern whatever in the matter.

Such, I believe, is a fair statement of the doctrine of philosophical necessity, or predestination confined to this life. It is not with a view of restraining our enquiry to this sterile and unprofitable field, that I have now entered upon it ; but it has a close connection with certain religious opinions relating to another life, which harrass and perplex many minds, and which, when they assume a certain determinate form and aspect, cause one of the most melancholy corruptions of our faith to which a Christian can be subject. And since the ground on which the doctrine of necessity rests, is the same with that on

which the creed of the Calvinist is built, although the latter defends his opinions also by the language of Scripture, and considers that to be his strong hold ; yet whatever discredit can be thrown upon the doctrine of *fatalism* in this life, may be at once transferred to the doctrine of *predestination* in another, as far as the appeal is made to human reason in support of that doctrine. And if the view which I propose to take of the question as it relates to this life be correct, it will also serve to explain *by analogy* many of those difficulties which occur to the reader of holy Scripture ; and will account for those frequent declarations concerning God's purposes and decrees respecting a future life, without admitting the bold and dangerous construction which the Calvinist fastens upon them, and which, if unhappily he lived up to his opinions, would go far to defeat the gracious end and design of the Gospel altogether.

Such is the general scope of this enquiry. To follow out the details of the argument

will require more than one discourse. On the present occasion I propose to direct your attention to that preliminary point at which we are now arrived ; and to consider whether the opinion of the Fatalist is reconcilable with other positions which we can prove to be undeniably true.

Now if we cast our eyes on the world as it actually is, we readily perceive that the activity and energy of men is increased by a persuasion that they have it in their power to attain certain ends—and that they never think of attempting that which they know to be impossible, or beyond their reach, or not capable of being obtained or averted by any thing they can do. To be taking measures for procuring a fertile season, or for stopping the mouth of a volcano, would be a certain proof of insanity. Men do indeed often engage in vain and chimerical undertakings, but it is under a belief of their practicability ; and as soon as they discover their error they leave off. Ignorant people also will take needless pains to promote those designs

which they favour, and which are going on steadily through the agency of other causes. Thus a child or a savage may exhaust his strength in endeavouring to quicken the motion of a ship, and fancy that he is contributing something towards it; but as soon as he learns that all goes on as well without him, and that he really lends no help, he desists as a matter of course. The same thing has been pointed out repeatedly in the disquisitions of political economy; and the wisest statesmen have long ceased to apply the agency of government in a thousand cases, which formerly occupied their attention, finding that the causes in operation are quite adequate and effectual to the desired end, without their interference.

Again, not only as in the cases we have been supposing, does a man desist from action as soon as he discovers that some superior influence *entirely* frustrates or *entirely* supersedes all his efforts, but in cases of a mixed nature, as far as this paramount influence is found to prevail, in the same *degree* does it tend to deaden the exertions of

individuals placed under such a system. In those communities, for instance, where all hope of advancement is denied to a certain class, it is notorious that industry is less active, and that all exertion, mental as well as bodily, is more languid. And even when all hope of advancement is not cut off, yet when it depends not upon the merit or address of the individual, but on the caprice of a despot, how feeble comparatively and inefficient is the motive to action.

Of the two grand motives then which actuate reasonable beings, hope and fear, the influence is always diminished in proportion to the opinion men have of the unalterable conditions under which they are placed. The nearest approach to that necessity which the laws of the material universe imply, is to be found in the laws of civil society: and if these are such as to render exertion needless or fruitless, indolence uniformly takes place of exertion, when good is before them, and languor or despondency instead of manly endeavours to avert any apprehended evil. Such is universally admitted

to be the effect of our own laws for the maintenance of the poor: the motive of *fear* is almost extinguished: and on the other hand, from the absence of *hope*, the labour of slaves is well known to be less productive than that of freemen, and this, precisely in proportion to the persuasion they have that they must always be slaves, and that no prospect of emancipation lies before them. So too in the conduct of those who are condemned to death, and to whom all the steps that lead to the final execution of their sentence assume the appearance of inevitable necessity. What stronger instinct is there in man than the love of life, and what incredible exertions have been often made to preserve it! Yet mark the conduct of him who is doomed to perish under sentence of the law: no struggle or resistance even to avoid that at which nature shudders—but a calm submission to decrees which he is convinced must take effect, however idly he may contend against them.

It would be easy to multiply examples and

authorities in support of this position. The memorable case of the plague of Athens will occur to many of my hearers, in which after the irresistible nature of the visitation was once impressed upon the people's minds, either a stupid despair, or an utter abandonment of all moral and religious principle succeeded. But the fact it is presumed will hardly be denied, that when men really believe, and the belief is present to their minds, that a decree has passed upon them, their own motives to action are weakened, if not wholly extinguished.

Will the Necessarian reply, that our exertions are as much fated as the things themselves which come to pass? This answer can never be admitted. It is assuming the very point in dispute. We have as much right to expect that he should accept our view of the case as we his, upon mere authority. The reasoning however which we have alledged is founded upon admitted *facts*—facts which *Necessarians* no more deny than the advocates of the opposite opinions—and

the strong tendency they have to overthrow the doctrine of necessity cannot be gainsaid.

Perhaps it will be said that the Fatalist, firmly convinced of the truth of his own opinions, feels himself to be an appointed instrument in the hands of this over-ruling power—an integral part of the grand scheme of the universe—and therefore that he will not be disposed to slacken his activity, or to shrink from that mode of action, which is to him like the discharge of any of the animal functions. This may be *said*; but it never will be *believed* that without the feeling of uncertainty, he should have the same hopes and fears, and consequently the same motive to action, with those who regard the event as liable to be affected by their own free choice. Neither, if there be any truth or force in the foregoing reasonings, *ought* it to be believed; for we have seen that the universal and actual tendency of such a belief as the Necessarian inculcates is, to relax our exertions in proportion as that belief predominates in the mind.

In fact, the usual resource of the Fatalist is of an opposite kind. He maintains with some vehemence, that those who hold his theoretical opinions, do *not* conform to them in practice; and he is ready to quote instances of illustrious men, and even of whole sects, who, under the profession of fatalism, lived exactly as other people do, took the same precautions, expressed the same hopes and fears, planned as anxiously and laboured as industriously as those who look upon events to be wholly contingent in their nature. But what does this answer amount to? It is a confession that they do not really believe what they profess. *Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.* Though they affect to talk as philosophers, they act as the vulgar; and exhibit in their lives a practical refutation of all their speculative conclusions.

Neither again is it absolutely true, that where this opinion of fatalism really occupies the mind, it is wholly dormant in practice. Among the Mahometans it is inculcated as an article of faith; and though among them,

as every where else, whatever contradicts the first principles of our nature cannot operate long, or habitually, or often, yet upon great and striking occasions, such as the plague or war, we are told that thousands *do* act upon this conviction—that they despise precaution, and expose themselves blindly to all hazards, as being sure that nothing they can do will hasten or retard their end one moment.

It is moreover contended, that none of those practical evils are to be dreaded which the adversaries of fatalism regard as connected with it, because the bulk of mankind will never have leisure so far to abstract their minds as to conceive the simple truth. Habit with them will always supersede reflection ; and habit is formed by successive acts, by natural instinct, by unthinking appetite, and by the example of those among whom we live, and whose modes of acting and thinking we imperceptibly adopt. And thus if even the philosophical advocate for necessity cannot avoid talking as if his will

were free, and as if events were liable to be affected by it, there is no great reason to fear that with the generality of men the persuasion will ever gain an ascendancy adverse to the real interests of life.

Now this is precisely the point to which I was desirous of leading the whole question. For if to *discover the true relations of things* be one of the proper employments of our being, if in proportion to the exercise and improvement of our intellectual faculties we come to see these things more clearly and to think of them more justly, so that our progress in this knowledge is a kind of measure of our intellectual advancement, it would follow, *upon the hypothesis of fatalism*, that every step we advance in knowledge we recede from utility ; and that in the same proportion as we grow wiser, we become less fit and less disposed to fulfil the purposes of our being. If fatalism represent the true relations of things, the path of error is then the path of utility and of happiness : truth has a tendency to lead us away from both : and the Creator has formed us full of active

powers and principles, and yet with a capacity and a disposition to draw nearer and nearer to that state, which, if we could ever actually reach it, would make all these faculties and principles implanted in us useless, and would reduce us to absolute inactivity.

But again, man is not only an *active* being, he is also a *moral* agent. He is not only made for the pursuit of his own good by certain powerful internal springs of action, he is also furnished with a sense of right and wrong, a feeling that he *ought* to do some things and not to do others, without reference to his immediate pleasure, but because he would be justly blameable for doing otherwise. These two constitute the most essential principles of his nature. We have seen how the doctrine of necessity is incompatible with the one—let us now briefly enquire, how the other is affected by it; pursuing here the same method of investigation, that is, first taking a view of man as he

actually *is*, in respect of moral principles, and then considering what he *would be*, in the same respect, if the doctrine of Necessity were true.

Now it cannot be denied, that in the habitual judgment of all mankind the moral quality of actions depends upon the freedom of the agent. Praise and blame, reward and punishment, uniformly imply, that we think the party who is the object of them might have acted otherwise: and as soon as it is discovered that he acted under compulsion, we no longer measure the action by the standard of duty. It is in fact the first excuse which a culprit makes, if he can, that his will had no share in the deed. The deed may, it is true, although proceeding from ignorance or from an extraneous power, still be culpable to a certain degree, if that ignorance were not inevitable, or if the person placed himself voluntarily in that state of subjection which deprived him of choice. But still our judgments in these matters all have respect to one principle—that man is

not accountable for what was not in his own power. If there be a strict physical necessity, as if one man hurt another by being forced against him, although a momentary sense of anger may arise, yet it would be quite absurd to impute blame to the party so impelled ; and no one consulting reason only ever does so. Further, if the necessity be *not absolute* or *physical* like this, but depending on *moral* causes almost equally powerful, we still acquit the agent of responsibility ; as in the case of soldiers performing their military duty, or the mere executioners of laws and decrees, however severe. And so with regard to good actions, as soon as it is found that they are not spontaneous—that some secret bias or impulse made it impossible for the person to withhold the good he has done—we even grudge the praise and admiration which his conduct may have before extorted from us. And although in all these cases, as far as the will of the agent can be ascertained to coincide with the orders he executes, whether good or evil, we are disposed to ascribe to him

some share of the quality of the action, yet in exact proportion to his efficacy in bringing it about, is the praise or the blame which we think justly belonging to him ; and the expression of concurrent will on his part inclines us only to regard him with favour or displeasure, just as we should regard an indifferent spectator, who had confessedly no share in the action itself which he was then beholding, but who signified corresponding emotions, and thus far afforded evidence of his own character.

And not only does this judgment arise in the breast, when we form an estimate of the conduct of *others*, but there is no palliative more frequently applied to an uneasy conscience, no surer advocate of crime and falsehood, no argument more apt to stifle the virtuous emotions and kindly feelings of our nature, than this plea of necessity. When this cause really and literally exists, the most solemn obligations, and instincts more sacred, if possible, even than they, have been known to yield. We turn from such cases with horror, but we pity rather than condemn

the victim thus entangled, as it were, in the inevitable net of fate. But the invention of man, when bent either upon some favourite object, or willing to vindicate his crimes, is ever busy in devising *pretended forms* of necessity to sanction a deviation from moral rectitude. And thus it is that evil of every kind public and private, cruel wars, oppressive government, unjust measures of state, dishonesty, deceit, rapine, and even murder, find a ready excuse. Men prove how valid and substantial the real plea is, by grasping thus eagerly at its shadow and mere resemblance, whenever the case will bear it. *Artificial difficulties* are misnamed *necessity*—and then, their “poverty but not their will consents” to the most dreadful crimes. For the voice of all mankind does undoubtedly bear testimony to this rule—that in proportion as the case *approaches* to absolute necessity, in the same degree is the offence of the party extenuated, and his responsibility abated.

Now let us suppose that, not only on some

great and rare occasions, but in *all the concerns* of life, that plea could be with truth alledged, which we allow to operate as an absolution even from the greatest crimes. Must not the knowledge or the belief of such a system tend to loosen all moral restraint, to confound all duties, to deaden moral feeling, and to silence the voice of conscience? Not that we suppose these effects will ever actually be produced to any extensive degree, because delusion will never prevail long over the fixed laws of our nature—but on the supposition that the doctrine of necessity is *true*, this conclusion must needs follow in *morals*, as before it did in the case of *active principles*. The more we learn the truth of things, that is, the wiser we grow, and the more steadily we improve and exercise our reasoning powers, the more do we furnish ourselves with motives for discarding moral responsibility—and thus man is formed by his Maker, a preposterous compound, with a *conscience* that informs him of his duty, and with an *understanding* that tells him, in proportion as it is cultivated and improved,

that his conscience is a mistaken guide. And it is to speculations such as these that the world gives the name of philosophical necessity!

Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!
 Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
 Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast
 With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.

That men should be brought to profess opinions, so contradictory to their own consciousness, to their moral feeling and judgment, and to all their real principles of action, I would by no means impute to a desire of throwing off these restraints, or of maintaining a stubborn and irreligious frame of mind. Much less would I insinuate that the advocates of Calvinism are actuated by such a motive. Many of them we know are lively patterns not only of piety but of moral virtue: and the dreadful heresy of avowed Antinomianism (although if it arise at all it certainly arises out of these doctrines) is so shocking to common sense, and so obviously

unscriptural, that it cannot ever prevail long over these counteracting causes. It is in fact extremely rare. But the natural *tendency* of Calvinistic opinions towards it, and to breed a carelessness with regard to moral conduct, not only appears demonstrable by fair reasoning, as in the case of Fatalism already discussed, but is confirmed also by historical testimony.

On the *causes* which appear to me most powerful in producing and keeping alive this dangerous paradox, I shall briefly touch in the conclusion of the present discourse. But I cannot forbear from pointing out in this place, although it may be a partial anticipation of the argument, how close a connection subsists between the whole question of Fatalism and that of Predestination—and how justly we may reason by analogy from one to the other.

The generality of Calvinists, when charged with the *consequences* of their opinions, like the Fatalists, answer that we ought to *address*

mankind as if their doom were unsettled—as if God were willing that all should be saved—and as if much depended on themselves whether they should obtain salvation or not. And when further pressed with the *inconsistency* of these opinions they reply, that such exhortations are the *appointed means of perseverance*. Be it so. Then they are means the efficacy of which is increased by turning our eyes away from the truth. For in proportion to the conviction we feel of the truth of the main doctrine, that is, the better we become acquainted, according to them, with the right interpretation of Scripture, and the more we meditate upon it, the weaker do these means become which are the appointed instruments of our salvation. This argument then is not a refutation, like many others, drawn from opinions opposite to theirs: it is involved in their own defence: it is admitted by themselves in the very acknowledgment they make, that we ought in practice to accommodate ourselves to the ordinary belief of mankind upon these subjects, however erroneous; or, in other words,

that advancement in the knowledge of truth may obstruct men's salvation.

In comparing the probable effects of Fatalism and of Calvinism upon the conduct of men, an important distinction ought always to be made, which is however very generally overlooked. The doctrines rest indeed on the same basis, but that of Calvinism is practically far more dangerous.

The Fatalist acts in general as other men do. He is not likely to neglect urgent duties, or to endure pain and privation for the sake of an abstract theory. His habits, his interests, his affections, his regard for character and for the opinion of the world, all keep him from being led astray by a speculative absurdity. But whatever security the Calvinist has of this kind is *weakened* by the very nature of his opinions. According to them he suffers *comparatively* nothing by yielding practically to their force: and their force is exerted in *lessening* the motives of a worldly nature which control the other. The instincts, the appetites, and the interests

of the Calvinist, may indeed rouse him to action, although in this respect their influence must be weaker than it is with the mere Fatalist; while the worldly restraints upon vicious indulgence are almost entirely removed. For since the effect of those principles which he holds is to take place *hereafter*, while the benefit of obeying natural impulse is *immediate*—since the effect of the former is to be *eternal*, while the inconvenience that may attend the latter is *temporary*—any momentary delusion which prompts him to expect pleasure by doing wrong is not only not counteracted, but is encouraged by this persuasion. The quantity of evil which may alloy his pleasure here (and which often comes in aid of virtue by presenting a drawback from the enjoyment) when viewed as a deduction from the sum of happiness which through all eternity will still remain the same, becomes absolutely evanescent.

The chief characteristic in fact of Fatalism, taken apart from Revelation, is its tendency to breed a disregard of *religious* duties, while

Calvinism has the same tendency with respect to *moral* duties. The man who looks only to this life, and who believes all events to be already fixed and unalterable, has little inducement to betake himself to prayer, or to the worship of the Deity—while he who looks chiefly to another life, and believes his destiny in that life to be fixed and unalterable, may naturally be careless and indifferent about his conduct here.

Thus it is observed of Tiberius, “*Circa Deos et religiones negligentior erat, quippe addictus mathematicæ, persuasionisque plenus, omnia fato agi*”.

The remark is made by a philosophical writer, and addressed to a philosophical age, as an obvious explanation of the irreligious habits of the emperor. *His* religion had little or no relation to a future state. There might be some mixture of this notion with it, as there might be some want of uniform steadiness in his belief of fatality: and therefore his biographer says, not that he abso-

° Suet. in Tib. c. 69.

lutely renounced religion, but that he was careless, *negligentior*, about it. As far however as his fatalism operated, it had that effect. And this is all I would urge in the case of the Calvinist. *His* fatality has little or no relation to the present state. It has perhaps as much, as the religion of the emperor had to a future state. As the views of Tiberius then were directed to this life, and because the gods could not affect his interests *here*, he thought little of them—so the Calvinist, whose views are directed to another life, will think little of his moral conduct, because it can have no effect upon his interests *there*. And thus, supposing in each case the absence of counteracting causes, and speaking of the respective opinions only so far as they really operate, it is as natural a conclusion that the Calvinist will be careless about *morals*, as that the Fatalist will be careless about *religion*^d.]

^d The Landgrave of Turing, a patron of the Reformed doctrines, being admonished by his friends of his vicious life and dangerous condition, answered, *Si prædestinatus sum, nulla peccata poterunt mihi regnum cælorum auferre*;

A most remarkable instance of this tendency occurs in the disputes which arose among some of the earliest sufferers for the Gospel's sake in this country; who were confined in the same prison during the persecution in Queen Mary's reign. Pious and conscientious as they all were, their differences on points of doctrine began with a complaint of the laxity of manners observed in the professors of absolute predestination, which gave offence to the more serious and sober-minded of their fellow-prisoners, as being unsuitable to their afflicted condition, and to the probable approach of death—a censure which the others scornfully rejected, as implying a want of assurance in their final salvation*.

si præcitus, nulla opera mihi illud valebunt conferre. “An objection,” says Heylin, “not more old than common; but such I must confess to which I never found a satisfactory answer from the pen of *Supralapsarian*, or *Sublapsarian*, within the small compass of my reading.” *Quinquarticular History*, Part I. chap. 4.]

* This account is taken from a very curious treatise lately published by Dr. Laurence, from a MS. in the Bodleian Library, entitled, *Authentic Documents relative*

But the analogy between Fatalism and Calvinism, which is the foundation of the

to the Predestinarian Controversy which took place among those who were imprisoned for their adherence to the doctrines of the Reformation by Queen Mary. Bradford was the advocate for that doctrine which afterwards received the name of Calvinism, and Trewe was a principal person of the opposite persuasion. The "Narrative" of the latter is a highly interesting document, written in a spirit of charity and meekness, and throws much light upon the history of these opinions. Speaking of the origin of the dispute he says, 'They did give such occasion of evil and offence to the weak by their using of gaming, that we could do no less but gently admonish them to leave it, and to exhort them after the Scriptures to re-deem the time, seeing the days are evil, and to leave such vain things, and to mourn with us, that did mourn for the great misery that is fallen on this land, and for the lamentable perplexity that many of our weak brethren (that were not able to bear the cross) were in, and to watch and pray continually, and strengthen us and our brethren in his truth to stand, that our lives and deaths might glorify his holy name.

'With the which they were not content, but defended it by the Scriptures, and because we would not give them place, but disproved them by the word, they were somewhat displeased with us; insomuch that in process of time they began to pick out matter against us, and because we did use abstinence and prayer, they reported us to be justifiers of ourselves, and such like; to

whole argument, will be treated of more at large hereafter. For the present, in answer

‘ the which we answered, that our justification came by
‘ faith in Christ’s death and bloodshedding, &c.

‘ After other talk, in conclusion they did affirm, that
‘ none of them that God ordained to be saved could be
‘ driven from him by persecution, nor yet by any other
‘ occasion or means. For all such as shall be saved (say
‘ they) were elect and predestinate thereunto before the
‘ foundation of the world was laid, and none of them can
‘ be damned, do what wickedness they can, &c.’

When pressed with those passages of Scripture, which
denounce God’s wrath and damnation against those that
wilfully sin against him, ‘ These sentences,’ said they,
‘ are written to put the elect in fear to do evil, that their
‘ lives might glorify their Father which is in heaven, and
‘ not to put them in fear of damnation. By this in effect they
‘ affirmed those Scriptures to be written in vain, or to put
‘ men in fear where no fear is, affirming *in effect*, that the
‘ words of the Holy Ghost doth no more good than a man
‘ of clouts with a bow in his hand doth in a corn field,
‘ which will keep away the vermin crows awhile, *but*
‘ *when they know what it is*, they will fall down beside it,
‘ and devour the corn without fear.’ Compare this last
homely illustration with the argument above pursued,
pp. 18 and 24. against the Necessarian, and p. 27. against
the Calvinist.

Trewe sums up his objections to the doctrine of the
Predestinarians in twenty-three propositions, which he
calls Enormities. The eighteenth Enormity is, ‘ Also

to the question which naturally arises, how opinions so unreasonable and extravagant could ever acquire an ascendancy over the human mind, I would account for the paradox, partly from the pride of intellect, refusing to admit the truth of things which it is unable thoroughly to comprehend and to reconcile with one another, although they are each capable of a separate demonstration—but still more from the thralldom in which men's judgments are held by the inaccurate use of language, and from an ignorance of some of the first principles on which language is constructed. It is not suitable to

'it giveth an occasion to neglect prayer, and to leave it altogether except it be for corporal food, raiment, and health of body, and such like, and nothing for the soul, in that it affirmeth contrary to the Scriptures, that all such as were predestinate before the foundation of the world was laid, must of necessity be saved, therefore they need not pray for it, and the residue must of necessity be damned, and prayer will not help them.'

The whole of this curious treatise, together with Dr. Laurence's able Introduction, who employs it to throw light upon the opinions of Cranmer and Ridley, is well deserving the study of those who feel any doubt upon the doctrine of our Established Church in these matters.

this place, nor would it materially conduce to the purpose I have in view, to track these errors through all the meagre and profitless disquisitions which are employed to support them. It will be sufficient to notice one or two of the most important as specimens of the whole class.

The doctrine of fate and predestination was strenuously maintained by the Stoical school, and we collect from Cicero, in his treatise *De Fato*, what the knot was which tied them down to such unnatural opinions. Every proposition, they said, is either true or false. This is essential to a proposition, and it is universally admitted. Although therefore I may not know which it is, yet that it is one or the other, and that it is so at the time it is uttered, is certain; and my ignorance does not at all affect the certainty of the proposition. Suppose then I say, "such an event will happen next year." It is at this moment either true or false, because the proposition is now, and when the thing happens, the truth which lay hid in the propo-

sition before is only made apparent then ; its nature is not altered. This they called a demonstration, and thought that nobody could deny it, who was not prepared to deny the premiss, "that every proposition is either true or false." But it is in fact an abuse of the word *true*—the precise meaning of which is "*id quod res est.*" An assertion respecting the *future* therefore is neither true nor false. And if they press us still farther with the nature of proposition, we have only to reply that it is not a proposition, in that sense of the word proposition above explained, and thus their whole argument falls to the ground. Frivolous as the example appears when exhibited in this simple form, yet whole volumes of perplexing metaphysics have been spun out of these flimsy materials^c.

^c The equivocal use of the word *true* is combined with another error that runs through all the reasoning in that treatise, whether the speaker be Epicurean or Stoic. There is a confusion of *words* with *things* ; physical *cause* is confounded with logical *reason*—*truth* with *reality*—certainty of the *mind* with certainty of the *object*.

A similar example is the use often made of the words *cannot* and *must* as applied to

When these equivocations are detected and removed, the whole dispute vanishes into empty air.

The argument against the contingency of events drawn from the principle, that every proposition is true or false, is put in a great variety of forms in the treatise *De Fato*, especially from chap. ix. to chap. xvi. to which I refer the reader ; but the sum of the whole is given by Tucker with his usual simplicity and perspicuity in the following passage.

‘ Epicurus denied the reality of fate, insisting that
 ‘ many things happened which were absolutely fortuitous :
 ‘ but then he could not get over the argument drawn by his
 ‘ opposers from the certainty of either the affirmative or nega-
 ‘ tive of every proposition that could be uttered concerning
 ‘ what is to come to pass hereafter. If, for instance,
 ‘ Epicurus in his lifetime had said, that on this fourteenth
 ‘ day of January, 1762, it would rain here in the morning
 ‘ and be fair in the afternoon, now the day is ended we
 ‘ may know that he spoke a certain truth : but truth can-
 ‘ not be turned into falsehood by any thing subsequent,
 ‘ therefore it was impossible any other weather should
 ‘ happen than has, because otherwise that might have been
 ‘ rendered false which we know for certain was once true.
 ‘ Neither could the fact contained in a proposition which
 ‘ was true two thousand years ago, become casual ever af-
 ‘ terwards ; for if it was always to come to pass, as we
 ‘ know it was from the event, it could never have been pos-
 ‘ sible that it should not come to pass ; but what was

the Almighty—a form of speech bold and irreverent at the best, and if thoroughly ex-

‘always impossible could never lie under the power of any cause or option of any agent to have effected.’ *Light of Nature*, vol. iv. c. 25. §. 23.

Tucker’s sagacity leads him indeed to reject this reasoning, with much more to the same purpose, and to detect many of the verbal sophisms involved in it: but the equivocations of *true* and *certain*, and the improper use of the word *proposition*, which are the real key to the riddle, he has not pointed out.

To these examples of what was called “profound reasoning” among ancient philosophers, let me add one on the same subject from a modern writer of great acuteness and ability, the well-known champion of Necessity and Predestination, Jonathan Edwards. I produce it as a curious proof, how vigour of intellect, when once entangled in a snare of words, only tends by its struggles to increase its own embarrassment.

‘There must be a *certainty in things* themselves, before they are *certainly known*, or, which is the same thing, known to be certain. For certainty of knowledge is nothing else but knowing or discerning the certainty there is in the things themselves, which are known. Therefore there must be a certainty in things to be a ground of certainty of knowledge, and to render things capable of being known to be certain. And this is nothing but the necessity of truth known, or its being impossible but that it should be true; or, in other words, the firm and infallible connection between the subject and predicate

amined perfectly absurd. To say that a power which *can* do every thing *cannot* do certain things, as, for instance, undo what has been done, or make that contingent which he knows will come to pass, is to contradict one's self. That it is impossible for the same thing *to be* and *not to be* is indisputable. When the meaning of one term of a proposition confessedly implies the negation of the other, it is absurd to dispute about them. Whether life be death, or light be darkness, cannot come into question even among logomachists. And therefore if we mean by the word *contingent*, that which cannot be known beforehand, we only say, that what cannot be known beforehand cannot be known beforehand—which is saying nothing—and therefore nothing is denied of the Deity.

' of the proposition that contains that truth. All certainty
' of knowledge consists in the view of the firmness of that
' connection. So God's certain foreknowledge of the fu-
' ture existence of any event, is *his view of the firm and in-*
' *dissoluble connection of the subject and predicate of the pro-*
' *position that AFFIRMS its FUTURE existence.*' Edwards
on the Freedom of the Will, Part II. §. 12.

But if the subjects and predicates of two apparently incongruous propositions are not precisely identical—if there be any shadow of difference not merely perceptible but possible in their meaning—although we may be incapable of reconciling their apparent incongruity, or of conceiving in what manner the things denoted by them can co-exist, yet it is palpably absurd, for those who admit the being of a God, to deny the possibility of this co-existence. And if the positive proofs for each assertion are separately unanswerable, reason requires that we should admit them both, without professing to explain the difficulty they involve.

Neither should it excite our surprise, that in words of such common use as *true*, *possible*, *certain*, and the like, any ambiguity should exist, or that any process of definition should be necessary to guard against fallacy in the employment of them. [While we confine our attention to the ordinary occurrences of life, or to those relations of things with which we are all familiar, no such precision or refinement is required.

The commonest tools need not be made with mathematical exactness. But when we push our enquiries beyond this daily sphere of vision, greater and greater accuracy is requisite in the instruments we employ. The slightest impurities in the atmosphere, a floating atom, or the vibration from a footstep, will interfere with the observations of physical science—and throw us perhaps at once out of our true course.

Ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air.

And when we take upon us to explore the hidden things of God, those vast regions which lie at an immeasurable distance from our ordinary range of thought, can it be surprising if the instruments which serve us well enough here, be found coarse and defective, and that when most perfect they should stand in need of the nicest care in adjusting them, before we can place any confidence in the result? Language is the chief, if not the only medium of all these speculations: and when the conclusions obtained by help of

this medium militate against the strongest moral convictions, and the first principles of our nature, is it not reasonable to suspect some inaccuracy in the process, some imperfection in the instruments, or some defect in those organs which are exercised upon objects far beyond the system for which they are principally designed? If indignation be ever justified upon occasions of this kind, it surely is allowable when we hear the name of philosophy applied to errors such as these; when men presume to scan the ways of Omnipotence, and fancy they are fathoming the depths of the mighty ocean, with a line that has not yet measured the soundings of the harbour from whence they set out.

But when these rash enterprises are taken in hand, and the confidence or the apparent skill and intrepidity of the leader draw many followers after him, it becomes a Christian duty to point out the dangers of the way, the diligent preparation it requires, or the mistaken views in which the plan originates. Metaphysical discussion then becomes valuable, like every other talent, according to

the use made of it. And that use surely is not inconsiderable, if, though it may not add to the stock of knowledge, it yet serves to keep us in possession of what is already known—if, to use the language of an eloquent writer as well as a most accurate and judicious reasoner, ‘it repairs the damage ‘itself had occasioned—like the spear of ‘Achilles, healing the wounds it had made ‘before—if it casts no additional light on the ‘paths of life, but disperses the clouds with ‘which it had overspread them—if it advances not the traveller one step on his ‘journey, but conducts him back again to ‘the spot from whence he had wandered⁵.’

There yet remain some points to be examined in the argument concerning God’s dealings with man, and the freedom and responsibility of man, regarding only the present life, before we shall be prepared to transfer the same method of reasoning to those analogous difficulties which have been started from the language of Scripture, and the removal of which is the ultimate aim

⁵ Light of Nature, Introd. lv.

of the enquiry thus begun: but the consideration of these must be made the subject of another discourse.

Note to p. 6.

Acknowledge the two things to have no connection.] Edwards in his work on the Freedom of the Will dwells much upon the distinction between making the event necessary, and proving it to be necessary. 'Whether prescience,' he says, 'be the thing that makes the event necessary or no, it alters not the case. Infallible foreknowledge may prove the necessity of the event foreknown, and yet not be the thing that causes the necessity.' Part ii. sect. 12. But infallible foreknowledge, while it remains foreknowledge, proves nothing. When the being which possesses this foreknowledge declares that a thing will come to pass, that declaration indeed proves, or is a certain ground of assurance to us, that it will come to pass. Even then it does not prove the event to be necessary.

This is an example of the same error which pervades the Stoical argument above mentioned, in the treatise De Fato—i. e. confounding words with things. One proposition may be a necessary consequence from another proposition: but the thing denoted by it is not therefore necessary. Indeed the slightest

reflection seems to be sufficient to inform us that the nature of things cannot be affected by any thing we say, or think, or know, or reason about them. All these operations are relative to our own perceptions, and can have no influence on the objects of those perceptions; which must ever be what they are, whether we reason about them or not.

If however the question be regarded as merely logical, namely, whether the very term *foreknowledge* does not imply a necessity in the thing foreknown, it must be decided by the established use of words. That such is not the received definition of the term may, I believe, be with confidence asserted: and the confusion, whenever it does prevail, seems to arise from the following cause. *We* may be unable to conceive how a thing not necessary in its nature can be foreknown—for *our* foreknowledge is in general limited by that circumstance, and is more or less perfect in proportion to the fixed or necessary nature of the things we contemplate—with which nature we become acquainted by experience, and are thus able to anticipate a great variety of events: but to subject the knowledge of God to any such limitation is surely absurd and unphilosophical as well as impious: and therefore to mix up the idea of God's foreknowledge with any quality in the nature of the things foreknown, is even less excuseable than to be guilty of that confusion when speaking of ourselves.



DISCOURSE II.



DEUT. viii. 5.

THOU SHALT ALSO CONSIDER IN THINE HEART, THAT
AS A MAN CHASTENETH HIS SON, SO THE LORD THY
GOD CHASTENETH THEE.

THE point which I endeavoured to establish in my last discourse was, that a belief in the absolute necessity of events, physical as well as moral, was not only repugnant to our natural and unsophisticated judgments, but that upon taking an attentive view of human nature, it was found to be contradictory and inconsistent with itself. For that in proportion as the belief obtained, all our active principles would become useless, and our moral principles destroyed—and that since the Necessarian himself allowed that to effect this belief considerable exercise

and improvement of reason was required, his theory involved this absurdity, that in exact proportion as our understandings were strengthened and improved, all the ends and purposes of our being would be counteracted.

That man should be so formed, as to discover truths, which militate against the very end for which he is formed, is in itself revolting to common sense : and if we pursue the enquiry, we shall find that all *experience* is against it also—that whatever we have the natural means of discovering, always is or may be valuable to us when discovered. Thus the knowledge of facts in the remotest regions of nature which art and science combined are for ever bringing to light, invariably tend sooner or later to some human use—and the subtlest and most remote often to the greatest uses. Thus too the knowledge of those *general laws*, which our natural powers rightly directed enable us to acquire, serves many important purposes of life—as, for instance, “ that we must all die once”—

but the *particular moment* of each man's death, a point which would obviously interfere with all our proper business and interests, although there may be a natural curiosity to know it, yet there are no *natural* means of acquiring that knowledge—and accordingly we find that for such a purpose recourse is had to *supernatural* means—omens, incantations, and all the absurdities of astrology and magic, by which the credulity of mankind has been abused. Although in this respect at least the proceeding is more rational than the creed of the Necessarian, inasmuch as the enquiring party implies that we must go *out of* nature to seek for that, which is so abhorrent to the very constitution of nature itself.

The next difficulty which I suppose may be objected to the opinions we maintain is, that they are inconsistent with the language habitually employed by religious men to denote their sense of the supernatural agency exerted in the world. It is an undeniable fact, that in all ages and under all forms of religion (setting aside for the present the

doctrines of Revelation) serious and good men have regarded the events of this life as subject to the control of divine Providence—that they have talked of the folly and conceit of mankind in supposing that *their* wisdom, *their* foresight, *their* power and contrivance, brought about the great or good things which happen—and though the men who make these reflections have had their hopes and fears, and taken their full share in planning and executing measures with a view to such events, yet after the event is passed, or even before it comes, in their graver and more contemplative hours they admit, that it is God's will alone to which the whole is owing—and that all things have conspired to the furtherance of some great plan of his, which has either served to promote the happiness of men, or to illustrate his own transcendent excellence.

Where then, it may be said, is the consistency of all this? Either they do not, while they are acting, think as they do when truth forces these reflections from them, or if they do, it is a proof that men may believe in a

superior power bearing onward with a steady and irresistible course, and yet act in concurrence with that power, just as if the issue depended on themselves. Now as to the first of these suppositions; it may be admitted without scruple, that men do, while they are engaged in action, think more of their immediate business, than of the share the power above them takes in the same process—and that in calmer and more leisurely hours, the impression of that supreme influence returns upon the mind with increased force, as some sound which in the stillness of the night fills the air, yet is lost or unperceived amidst the several discords and noises of a busy day. But the position can never be conceded, that the belief of this controlling power is contradictory to the belief of the freedom of human actions. For in the first place it does not follow that because we believe this power to be exercised, therefore it is exercised to the exclusion of all other influence. And again, it may be, (to speak in a manner adapted to human conceptions and human experience,) it may be kept in

reserve to act upon occasions ; it may form the *plan* and the *outline*, and delegate the subordinate parts to minor agents ; it may, for the purpose of exercising the fidelity and zeal of those agents, one while keep itself out of sight ; or at another, to animate their exertions, let them perceive its presence ; or, to check their folly and presumption, make them feel their dependence, and frustrate their endeavours—it may, supposing these agents to have a will of their own, incline that will to act conformably to their duty, by making that duty appear easy and agreeable, by removing obstacles and terrors, and placing attractive objects in their way ; or if the will be stubborn, it may make it feel the ill consequences of that stubbornness, and it may contrive that its perverseness shall defeat its own purpose, and forward some other purpose which is kind and beneficial : it may make the misconduct of one instrumental to his own correction, or to the improvement and fidelity of the rest, by shewing, in ordinary cases of disobedience, the evil he brings upon himself—or in cases of

extreme depravity, the utter abandonment and ruin to which the delinquent is left.

Does any part of such a scheme either detract from the notion of a supreme intelligence planning, governing, guiding, and accomplishing the whole? or can such a conception in the mind of man of the scheme of divine Providence tend to relax his energy, to discourage his industry, to impair the distinctions of right and wrong, or weaken the principle of duty and obedience?

The only argument brought against it is borrowed from the difficulty of accounting for *evil* as mixed with God's creation, and of conceiving free-will in his creatures. But *difficulties* can never be listened to against the evidence of facts. The fact of the existence of evil no one denies,—and the existence of free-will is by the concurrent unreflecting testimony of all mankind admitted to be a fact, opposed only by the metaphysical objections of a few. That all mankind act, speak, and think, as if the will were free, is admitted by these few themselves. And I

trust it may be regarded as proved, that to think otherwise would deprive us of all motives to action, and all sense of right and wrong. It is only because they cannot conceive *how* these two things can co-exist, that they call upon us to surrender our consciousness, our activity, and our moral principles.

Some endeavour was made in the preceding discourse to prove the absurdity of calling that impossible with God, which appeared irreconcilable to ourselves. When there is a palpable contradiction in terms, so that one part of the proposed idea negatives the other, the thing may be called impossible: although in this case it would be more correct and more safe to use the word *contradictory* than impossible; because it is with us—with our mode of speaking and combining ideas—that the difficulty both begins and ends: the power of God is not denied or limited by these negations. Thus if I were called upon to make a circle whose radii should be unequal, or whose diameter should be one-fourth of the circumference, it would argue

no want of *power* in me not to do it ; and to call it a *self-contradiction* would be more strictly proper than to say that it was *impossible*. In a simple instance of this sort we readily discern that there is nothing in reality proposed to be done : but we might go on requiring conditions equally destructive of the essence of the thing, and yet not so *manifest* as this—involving a denial of some more hidden properties, relative to triangles or squares or ellipses, or properties which are only elicited by a very complex combination of the circle with other figures. There is in fact no end to such possible relations and combinations ; and yet in any case, if there be an impossibility involved in the very terms of the problem, as there often is through the ignorance of him who proposes it, to many an unlearned person it might seem as if limits were assigned to my power, whereas it would be more proper to say, that the problem itself has no meaning.

Now, if we consider how small a part of God's works, both in extent and in duration, our faculties can embrace, and further, how

intimately and variously connected all the parts of those works are, plainly indicating one scheme, of which the remotest parts have numerous and complicated relations with each other, so that much of what we see is essential to what we do not see, and to suppose one without the other would be a contradiction in terms as literal, though not so palpable, as a circle with unequal radii—when, I say, all our enquiries into nature only tend to impress upon our minds this wonderful concatenation—and when, again, a scheme perfectly analogous to this has been traced in the *moral* world, insomuch that in the history of mankind there is no one event, however trivial, but may have intimate and essential connections with all other events, however grand and important; and these connections may run out into all possible combinations, and multiply to all infinity—when, I say, we reflect on all this, he must indeed be a rash and vain reasoner, who does not admit the *probability* that all his own perplexities arise from imperfect acquaintance with the objects of his

speculation—and that where facts militate against his reasonings, some impossible condition was involved in his own expectations—something destructive of the very essence of that thing which was the main object of his thoughts.]

And thus we may conclude with regard to all questions in which the infinite power of God is represented as being irreconcilable with something that either is, or is alleged to be—that unless an actual contradiction can be pointed out in the terms of the proposition, no difficulties can justify a denial of its possibility—and on the other hand, that many of those things which fill us with difficulty to account for, are necessary conditions to other things the existence of which we assume, and could not without involving a contradiction have been otherwise. So that what we first thought to be *impossibilities*, turn out to be only *difficulties*—and, on the other hand, many of the *difficulties* which perplex us in the scheme of Providence are such, that the removal of them,

keeping other things as they are, would be an *impossibility*.

Let us return then to the consideration of the actual scheme of God's providence on earth, as we learn it by experience; and see whether by attributing to men the power of choice, and regarding them as in a great measure working out their own happiness or misery, we do at all derogate from the sovereignty and active providence of God, or say any thing inconsistent with the first principles of religion—that he knows all things—that he made all things—that he governs all things—that he wills the happiness of his creatures—and that for his glory they are and were created.

Now one of the first characteristics of this scheme is, that we are placed in a state of *trial*, and that we feel good and evil, pain and pleasure, to be the natural consequences of our actions—that we soon find our respective interests depend greatly upon our

conduct—and that, generally speaking, virtue and industry is rewarded, vice and laziness punished, in this life. We see however that this scheme is carried on, not by single and insulated acts, but by *general laws*, which are such that our faculties soon enable us to comprehend them, and so to anticipate in a great degree the consequences of our actions. We readily perceive also how well this constitution of things accords with the design of making us joint workers and instruments in effecting our own fortune: since, if there were no *system* according to which events appeared generally to fall out, there would be no room for judgment, or prudence, or skill—nothing to determine our conduct beforehand, or to afford the means of acquiring any future good, or guarding against evil.

Yet, on the other hand, if every thing fell out *precisely* in a way that might be foreseen, if good conduct were invariably followed with success, and the degree of reward exactly apportioned in every case to the virtue, and of punishment to the vice, of the party—if this order were constant, and perceptible,

and certain, the main purpose which we have been supposing, that of disciplining a free and a moral agent by a course of trial, would be much counteracted. As without *evil* in the world, actual or possible, we cannot conceive any *trial*, so, if an exact and immediate requital were awarded in every instance to our actions, there would be no exercise for many of those qualities which are constituent parts of our moral nature. Under such a system life would be nothing more than a prudent calculation: selfishness might take the place of virtue; and the principle of fidelity and duty would have no scope. As without the presence of danger it is not easy to conceive any proof of courage, or of temperance without lust, or of obedience without temptation to *do* wrong, so there is no room for the exercise of forbearance, forgiveness, and generosity, without *suffering* wrong. Without pain and privation there can be no patience—without distress in others, no sympathy in ourselves—no occasion for pity, for relief, for succour, for consolation, for any of those

acts of love and charity, which are perhaps the most efficacious towards our own improvement, and towards fitting us for the enjoyment of a higher state of being. And though we presume not to say how much or how little of these modes of trial may be requisite for the perfection of our nature, yet reason at once informs us, that without *some* such trial the principles of our nature would have no exercise; and therefore that some temporary deviations from the general law of equity are essential to the discipline and probation of a being constituted as man is. To suppose that kind of moral excellence, which leads to higher and higher degrees of happiness, to be attainable without previous trial, may, for aught we know, be as absurd as to suppose a circle with unequal radii: and to suppose *trial* without *evil* seems to be equally absurd. Wherefore all objections to such a proceeding, as derogatory from the power and goodness of God, resolve ultimately into an assumption, that to make any thing not thoroughly perfect and thoroughly happy at once, or, in short, to make any variety in his creation, is unworthy of him.

Let us proceed then with the examination of that scheme of things which actually is, and which the more we examine it, the more is it found to be adapted to our nature, and to the supposed design of God.

As creatures of God, and acting under his superintendence, our reason informs us, that to maintain an intercourse with him and to preserve a sense of our dependence upon him, must be a part of our business here. Prayer and meditation on his attributes are the obvious means of effecting this—and accordingly it is a universal practice, wherever any sense of religion is entertained among men. In the mode of preferring their petitions, as well as in the things they pray for, a thousand differences and a thousand errors prevail: but in all cases the act itself implies a belief that the Deity is not inflexible, and that things are not absolutely so determined as to render our supplication fruitless. We suppose indeed that the government of God is carried on by general laws: and therefore prayer should always be accompanied with a disposition to acquiesce

humbly in a refusal, on the ground that our petition might have interfered with the good of others or of ourselves. But that system of laws by which the world is governed is not understood to be so fixed, as that to pray for any modification of it should be improper—nor yet, on the other hand, is it reasonable to expect that this system should bend and yield according to the particular wants of each individual. The good that each of us derives from the *regular* operation of the general system ought certainly to be acknowledged as flowing from the author of that system: but as man is prone to overlook what is settled and familiar, and to be affected in a more lively way by what is *occasional*, and by what seems to have an especial reference to himself, a gracious provision is made for the preservation of this sense of dependence on God, by the need which is continually felt of recurring to his protection and indulgence.

This habit however is also liable to *its* perversion and abuse. And accordingly we find that ignorant or sanguine people are perpe-

tually interpreting the occurrences of life as special marks of divine favour or displeasure. When applied to the success or the misfortune of others, nothing can be more reprehensible or more unchristian than this practice—and though less pernicious in our own case, yet since it breeds a narrow notion of God's providence, and borders close both upon presumption and superstition, there is often need of correcting and chastening it, by turning men's attention to the settled order of things, by which these events may be accounted for without the aid of any particular interference of divine power. In proportion as the understanding is cultivated, and our knowledge enlarged, these false impressions are corrected, and a more sober and rational sense of religion succeeds to them.

Let not the Necessarian attempt to retort on us the argument already employed in refutation of his scheme, namely, that if the more we know of nature the less prone we are to interpret natural events as particular

acts of Providence, then *we* also admit, that in proportion as reason is cultivated our natural judgments are counteracted. The two cases are widely different. In *his* case it is not sudden and early *impressions* that are required to give way to a more abstract and philosophical view of things, but our gravest and most deliberate *judgments*, the foundation of all our plans and proceedings in life, of all our motives to action, and of all our moral discipline. In the case of the untutored Indian, who

Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind,

or of the peasant, who interprets every natural event which at all affects his interest as specially designed for that purpose, it is not his *deliberate judgment*, but his *first impressions*, which subsequent knowledge counteracts. Those impressions, although they bring with them a lively sense of God's power, yet often, as we have observed, lead to evil; and the reasoning which controls them opens to the mind at the same time a larger view of this very providence; thus substitut-

ing a calm and serious conviction, in place of an irregular and desultory feeling: so that religion may be said to gain rather than lose by the process of correction.

But to proceed with our main argument.

Precisely analogous to God's dealings in dispensing the good things of life, and to that method by which a sense of our dependence on him for the enjoyment of these blessings is kept alive in us, is the communication also of that unseen influence upon the mind, which good and pious men desire, and the belief of which even under the guidance of the light of nature was very general. "That every good and every perfect gift is from above," is a sentiment not *introduced* but *adopted* by an Apostle of Christ. It occasionally breaks through the gloom of the philosophy and the religion of the heathen world: and the sublimer strains of their poetry speak the same language. That God favours those who yield to his influence—but that he rejects and abandons or drives

on headlong to their ruin men who resist his will—are frequent exclamations of those who contemplate with an awful wonder his moral government of the universe. That these wicked and rebellious men, when they fancy they are pursuing their own schemes, are baffled and foiled, and made subservient to those very purposes which they endeavour to defeat—that they are raised aloft in order to render their fall more exemplary—that they are flattered for a time with the apparent success of their iniquity, in order that the punishment when it comes may be more heavy and more instructive—these are reflections which cannot be new to any who are conversant with the ancient heathen writers; and they accord also with those occasional impressions which the passing events of life or the records of history make upon all serious minds.

It is not till they involve themselves in metaphysical perplexities, that men regard these things as incompatible with the acknowledged attributes of God, or with the free will of man. But when once they begin

to enquire whether the world might not have been constructed otherwise, whether evil might not have been dispensed with, whether what God foreknew can be said to proceed from the free will of man, and whether he must not be understood as having preordained every occurrence however minute or however iniquitous which takes place in the world, it is no wonder that their enquiries should be lost in endless mazes, or in a denial of something which it is as necessary to admit as any other proposition which they think proper to retain.

If however these difficulties are traced up to some fundamental positions, that are not *contradictory*, but whose existence is only *inconceivable* to our faculties, if each of these positions must be separately admitted, although their union is mysterious and unaccountable, it is not *adding* to the difficulty, it is a natural and probable conclusion, that many *consequences* from each of those fundamental positions separately taken should be deducible, which are no more reconcile-

able with each other in our apprehensions, than the original truths are from which they are derived. To dwell upon these subordinate truths, these consequences of the original positions, to set them in array against each other, to represent him who holds the one side as necessarily contradicting the other, and to demand an explicit disavowal of every tenet connected with the one, before we will acknowledge that a man really believes the other, is the sure way to perpetuate strife, and to defeat the practical good which may be derived from both opinions. If that God made every thing, knowing beforehand all that would come to pass and all that men would do, be an undeniable truth—if nevertheless he deals with man as if he were free to act, and rewards and punishes him according to this trial—and we cannot *comprehend how* both these things should be true together, we yet can *believe* them both *to be true**, and so believing, we may well

* This distinction, often overlooked in controversy, is clearly pointed out and well applied by Bishop Tomline in his *Refutation of Calvinism*, chap. iv. p. 250—254.

conclude that many of our occasional reasonings concerning these things must be infected with the same apparent incongruity that strikes us in the enunciation of those first principles. We ought not to wonder at these difficulties; we ought rather to expect them. Strife must be endless, if we are not to rest till they are all explained and harmonized: and error, not truth, will prevail, if either position be so established as to exclude the other. Let us however carefully bear in mind that these are not *contradictions* but *apparent incongruities*—and the same answer which we give to those who press us with the *main* difficulty, must in all reason be allowed to cover these also.

In such a state of things, however, reason as well as charity requires that we should give to each doctrine that form and complexion which is least hostile and inconsistent with the other, seeking rather to soften discrepancies, and to approximate if we cannot identify opinions, instead of assuming that tone of challenge and defiance, which

implies that there is no difficulty to be overcome; and that he who will not renounce the one, is justly chargeable with all the pernicious consequences involved in a denial of the other. There may be truths, as there are mathematical lines, which must ever approach, although to the comprehension of a finite being they will never coincide. Such questions then, which by their very nature cannot admit of a perfect solution, should never be started as proper objects of human investigation. They may be resorted to by the sophist as an inexhaustible storehouse of wrangling and controversy; but he who values discussion only as it tends to elucidate truth, will turn away from that which ministers only debate, satisfied with the possession of those undoubted truths, without which his own existence is a still greater mystery than the deepest of all these perplexing speculations.]

From this point then the transition is easy to the consideration of those *analogous* dif-

difficulties in the doctrine of revelation, which have so often divided the Christian world. If the scheme of revelation, as has been admirably explained by Bishop Butler, bears a close analogy to the scheme of God's natural government, so that the characteristics of the one correspond in all leading points with the system of the other—if the difficulties of revealed religion are no greater and no other than what we might, from a contemplation of the course and constitution of nature, have reasonably expected to find in it—thus confirming instead of weakening the conviction of their common origin—we shall of course be prepared to find each of those doctrines now considered, which our natural reason has collected from the study of the world around us, plainly and explicitly set forth in that volume which professes to lead us onward to another world. The book of God's *word* speaks a plainer language, but not a contradictory language to the book of God's *works*. He has bountifully bestowed upon us in this life, chequered as it is, gifts and blessings to animate our hopes and to reward our obedi-

ence : but he bids us receive them as flowing from his free grace—as no man's right, though they be every man's hope—as objects of prayer to him, no less than of exertion in themselves—and he would have us still awfully regard him as knowing from all eternity whatever has been, is, or will be.

{ In the dispensation, therefore, of those greater gifts and better promises which his *written word* has made known to mankind, we cannot but expect, that the same assertion of universal sovereignty, of absolute knowledge, and unbounded power, extending to all that we now do or shall do hereafter, would frequently be made. It is the seal of revelation set to one of the earliest conclusions of human reason. But we must also expect, that as in the *natural world* the trial of our virtue is apparently the main object, and the dispensations of Providence seem to be especially designed to make us feel how much depends upon ourselves in this state of earthly discipline, so the trial of our faith should be set forth in *Scripture* as one grand



DISCOURSE III.



Acts ii. 23.

HIM, BEING DELIVERED BY THE DETERMINATE COUNSEL AND FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD, YE HAVE TAKEN, AND BY WICKED HANDS HAVE CRUCIFIED AND SLAIN.

IT has been my endeavour in two former discourses to demonstrate that the doctrine of philosophical necessity is not only at variance with the evidence of consciousness, but that it contradicts the soundest conclusions of human reason; and that the common arguments by which men are driven to allow it, originate partly in an equivocal use of words, and partly in a fallacious assumption that when we are unable to *account for* the co-existence of two propositions, one or other of those propositions must be false.

We do not deny that the attribute of fore-

knowledge in the Deity makes it difficult to conceive how men can be regarded by him as free and accountable agents—nor again that the doctrine of an overruling Providence, which ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, is hard to be reconciled with the apparent contingency of events and the freedom of human actions—and with all those other subordinate truths necessarily involved in these principles ; as, for instance, the duty of prudence, vigilance, and activity in ourselves, of advice, entreaty, warning, exhortation, and command to others, and, above all, with the duty of earnest prayer to God : nor is it easy to conceive how praise and blame can attach to conduct not only *foreseen* by the Almighty, but continually represented to us as *ordained* and *appointed* by his will.

If, however, we set ourselves to examine each of these abstract positions separately from the other, dark and perplexing as the enquiry often is, yet the arguments deducible from reason and experience, alternately in

their favour, appear to be irresistible : and as one of the most candid enquirers observes, ' What flashes of light break out from time to time, present the image of truth on opposite sides'.^a Why then should not truth itself be really an inmate of each opinion? Unless it can be shewn, which never has yet been shewn, that the two opinions are *contradictory* to each other. That they are contradictory has been tacitly assumed, because to us their union is inexplicable : and hence the most pernicious errors of different kinds have at times prevailed—some denying or doubting the agency of Providence—others the freedom of the human will.

True it is, that besides these difficulties, originally inherent in the subject itself, men superadd others of their own creation : all of which will, I believe, upon a patient and impartial investigation, be found to arise from latent ambiguities in the language employed—ambiguities which impose upon us more easily in proportion as the words in

^a Tucker, vol. iv. c. 26.

which they occur are of familiar use, and thus pass along without exciting attention, or awakening the slightest degree of suspicion. Men dig too deep for a solution which lies upon the very surface; and after straining their faculties in vain to comprehend what they thus render perplexed for themselves, are unwilling to suppose that some humbler enquirer after truth has by a simple expedient unravelled the whole mystery.

One example has already been produced in the word *certainty*, which properly relates to the *mind* which thinks, and is improperly transferred to the *object* about which it is thinking. However convenient this transference of the term may be in common life, it leads to the most erroneous conclusions in abstract reasoning: and the further adoption of a term as opposed to it, for the purpose of denoting another class of events, viz. *contingent*, has contributed to fix the error. The same may be said of the term *probable*, which is frequently used as if it denoted

some quality in the events themselves, whereas it is merely relative, like *certain* and *contingent*, to the human mind, and is expressive of the manner in which we stand affected by such and such objects.

Another important example of the same kind is in the use of the words *possible*, and *impossible*. These are equally ambiguous with the others, as being applied sometimes to events themselves, and sometimes used with reference to our conceptions of them—but of these it is observable that their *primary* and proper application is to events, their *secondary* and improper to the human mind. Thus we say that a thing is possible to a man who has the *power* of doing it—and that is properly *impossible* which no power we are acquainted with can effect. But the words are also continually used to express *our sense* of the chance there is that a thing will be done. When we mean to express our firm conviction that a thing will not happen, although there are *powers* in nature competent to produce it, we call it impossible, in direct opposition to those things which we

are convinced *will* happen, and which we call certain. And thus there are many things which in one sense are *possible*, that is, within the compass of human agency, which again according to our conviction are absolutely *impossible*. In this latter sense the terms possible and impossible are used to denote the two extremes of the scale of probability—possible being the faintest degree of probability, and that which exceeds the utmost bounds of credibility being habitually pronounced impossible. This distinction is sometimes expressed by the words *physical* and *moral* impossibility, a distinction to which I would not object, provided it be understood not as marking two *kinds* of impossibility, but merely two *senses* in which the word is employed.

There is however a third sense in which we are apt to use the word, and which has led to much confusion in speculations of this nature, that is, when we use it for *inconsistent* or *contradictory*: and it was before observed, that in speaking of the Almighty it would be

more safe as well as more decent to employ this language than the word *impossible*. The whole difficulty is then declared to lie, where it really does lie, not in the things, but in the notions we form, or in the words by which we express them : and any statement or description of which one part is shewn to be destructive of another is immediately admitted by every rational mind to have no meaning. In this manner, I endeavoured to prove that most of those speculative difficulties which perplex men's minds, about divine prescience, providence, free-will, and the origin of evil, turn out to be disputes concerning the signification of words ; one party choosing to employ the word about which the dispute turns in a sense *exclusive* of some idea which the other regards as *compatible* with it, and which the first party allows to be in itself a probable and reasonable supposition, hard to be denied or disbelieved, and which nothing but the shackles he has imposed upon himself by this arbitrary definition of a term prevents him from admitting.

The author of the *Light of Nature*, in the chapter before quoted, has stated the case of the controversy about Providence and Free-will in a manner perfectly accordant with the view here taken of such disputes. Nothing can be clearer or more precise to those who are acquainted with the technical terms employed ; and as his statement of the question is concise, it may not be amiss to produce it in his own words.

‘ An universal providence disposing all
 ‘ events without exception, leaves no room
 ‘ for freedom. But there is such a provi-
 ‘ dence, therefore no freedom : or on the
 ‘ other side, there is a freedom of the will,
 ‘ therefore no such providence. Thus both
 ‘ parties lay down the same major, without
 ‘ which they would make no scruple to
 ‘ admit the minor assumed by their antago-
 ‘ nists. But the most sober and considerate
 ‘ part of mankind, induced by the strong
 ‘ evidences both of freedom and providence,
 ‘ have forborne to pronounce them incom-
 ‘ patible, *the only obstacle against the re-*
 ‘ *ception of either* : yet look upon their con-

‘*sistency* as one of those mysteries which we are forced to admit though we cannot explain^b.’

Both parties, he observes, remain safe while they keep within their own trenches; and alternately each opinion has become predominant in certain times or countries, to the prejudice if not to the entire suppression of the other—thus evincing to every impartial observer that there is an intrinsic vigour in each, which enables it, however obscured for a time, to rise again in its original splendour, and that each has a solid foundation in truth and nature.

To assume then the inconsistency of these two things, or, in other words, to attach that meaning to the word foreknowledge, or providence, which shall *exclude* the notion of freedom in the will or the actions of man, is surely an unreasonable as well as an arrogant practice. In reasoning it is precisely that error which is called, *begging the question*—and when viewed in a moral or a reli-

^b Tucker, vol. iv. c. 25. p. 135.

gious light, what can be more reprehensible, what more unworthy of the humility and veneration which is due from man to God, than to impose arbitrary rules of speaking which tend to obliterate one of the fundamental truths which the Creator has implanted in the very constitution of our being ?

If our reason then directs us to acquiesce in this belief as supported by the strongest evidence which the light of nature affords, we might well expect that the revealed word of God would not leave *either of these truths* to be overpowered and kept down by the other, but would assert them each with additional evidence and authority. In proportion as Scripture contains more direct information of the divine nature and attributes than unassisted reason can supply, it is reasonable to presume that the supreme power of the Creator and his concern for the welfare of his creatures would be there still more unequivocally proclaimed than they are in the works of nature : and again, inasmuch as its object is to regulate and instruct man in his

duty towards God, we might well expect that it would recognize still more explicitly the freedom of that will which is to be moulded and regulated so as may best please his Maker, and conduce to his own final happiness.

That such is the *fact* the very mode of carrying on the controversy sufficiently proves: for there is an abundant supply of texts which unquestionably contain each doctrine; but between the scriptural and the philosophical disputants there is this material difference—that whereas in philosophy free-will has been pressed against the doctrine of providence, almost as much as providence against that of free-will, yet when the parties take their stand upon scriptural ground, it is only the advocate for predestination that ever contends *directly* against the opinion of his adversary—the advocate for free-will never pretending to derogate from the foreknowledge or the superintendence of God, but being charged only by his opponent with holding opinions that must draw that consequence after them.

Occasionally indeed the zeal of eager disputants has led them to reason against the Calvinistic doctrines in such terms, as to be inconsistent with the acknowledgment of those doctrines in any sense; not understanding, or not bearing in mind, that the words *knowledge, counsel, will, predestination, decree*, are applied to the Almighty only in an analogical sense—that they are borrowed from human affairs, and employed when speaking of divine things as imperfect expressions—as suitable only in the way of comparison or resemblance—as helping us to form some conceptions, however inadequate, of God's adorable perfections—yet as fully sufficient to *instruct us* how we ought to think and act towards him, which is their principal end and meaning^c.

^c ‘ We make no scruple,’ says Archbishop King in his admirable Sermon upon this subject, ‘ to acknowledge
‘ that Love and Hatred, Mercy and Anger, with other
‘ passions, are ascribed to God; not that they are in him,
‘ as we conceive them, but to teach us how we are to
‘ behave ourselves towards him, and what treatment we
‘ are to expect at his hands. And if so, why should we

This fault however is not common, at least not with the writers of our own Church. It is with the Predestinarian then that our business chiefly lies; and we complain that he unwarrantably interprets those passages of Scripture which declare that things happen from the appointment and the ordinance of God, from his *purpose*, his *counsel*, his *will*, as if mankind were not at liberty to do otherwise than they have done—and as if he punished them for those acts which he designed they should commit, and the commission of which it was not in their power to avoid.

Some writers indeed of the Calvinistic school have gone so far as to declare, that the fall of man was decreed by God in order to bring in the gracious scheme of redemption—that the sin therefore of our first parents was part of the original purpose and counsel which he had from all eternity—to which

‘ make any difficulty to think that *foreknowledge*, *purposes*, *elections*, and *decrees*, are attributed to him, after the same way, and to the same intent?’ *Serm. on Predestination*, §. 29.

form of Calvinism the epithet of *Supralapsarian* has been applied. But others, and by far the majority in modern times, disclaim this tenet in the strongest terms. To represent God as the author of sin they regard as blasphemous in the highest degree: and it is with pleasure I quote the words of one of their most pious and temperate writers to the same effect; ‘God is not the author of sin. ‘A Calvinist who says so I regard as Judas, ‘and will have no communion with him’.

‘ Scott’s Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism, vol. ii. p. 99. Upon this point I cannot but subscribe to the words of the same writer in another place, whose truly Christian sentiments I always admire, although his opinions upon the main doctrine under consideration appear to me mistaken and dangerous.

‘ It is greatly to be wished, that they who engage in ‘religious controversy would reverently avoid all language that even seems to impeach the conduct of God, ‘on the supposition that their own tenets are not true. ‘ . . . Are we so completely infallible, that we should ‘speak a word implying, that if we be mistaken, God is? ‘On this unhappy subject, no tongue can express the ‘irreverence, nay the blasphemy which has been uttered ‘by eager disputers. I am conscious, that I have no need ‘nor inclination to adopt any argument of this kind: but

Heartily as I concur with the sentiment here expressed, yet it does not immediately appear why the same reserve for the honour of God and for his *will* expressly revealed in other passages of Scripture, should not equally be made in the interpretation of those texts which they produce as proofs, that God has foreordained, long before the fall, certain individuals only to be saved—that he sent his Son into the world only for these chosen few, ‘who are predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will’—and that the eternal happiness or misery of men is the consequence of his absolute decree passed before they were born, even from all eternity.

That God created all things and all men, knowing the minutest point of every man’s

‘should I drop one word, implying by fair construction such a connection between my sentiments and the honour of the divine perfections; that if the former are erroneous, this is exposed to impeachment or even doubt; I will promise before God, publicly with shame to retract it, when pointed out to me.’ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 132.

future conduct, is universally admitted. ‘The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea even the wicked for the day of evil*.’ Yet we acknowledge that the wickedness of these men must not be imputed to God as its author; and however inconceivable the congruity of the two assertions may be, we are all ready to exclaim with the apostle, ‘Let God be true, and every man a liar,’ rather than do violence to this fundamental principle. Why then must we be tied down to understand those declarations of God’s purpose and will, his foreordained dispensations, his appointments and ordinances, with which the Scripture abounds, as if they laid a restraint upon human liberty? or as if they meant any thing more than that God foresaw how men would act, and adapted his proceedings in such a manner as to accomplish his gracious purposes even in spite of their wickedness? How to reconcile this *foreknowledge* with the *moral probation* of man, we are ready to admit, is not within the reach of our faculties: but all are agreed that each fact sepa-

* Prov. xvi. 4.

rately taken is distinctly announced in the word of God.

That *evil* exists, and that God is not the author of it, although the author of every thing else, undoubtedly carries with it as great a difficulty as the other question we were considering. We readily perceive that this difficulty arises out of the nature of a *created responsible free agent*, an anomaly among all the objects of our understanding which we can never hope thoroughly to comprehend. We cannot indeed conceive how a being who *knows* all things that will come to pass, should subject another being of his own creating to *trial*—that he should expose this being to temptation, *knowing* what the issue will be, and yet speak to him before and treat him afterwards as if he did *not* know it. But, admitting this, it is not *contradictory* to reason, it is *agreeable* to it, and what we might naturally expect, that all the declarations concerning this singular object, should involve in them more or less of that difficulty which resides in the very notion itself; and in proportion as they

relate more nearly to that part of man's nature which is thus peculiar and inexplicable, that the difficulty of explaining them by comparison with other things should be increased.]

There is nothing in nature which stands in the same relation to us which a *moral free agent* bears to his Creator; and accordingly all the language we employ to denote this relation, being borrowed from our own relation to the things around us, must be partial and imperfect expressions, never comprehending at once the whole of this complex idea, but exhibiting that portion of it which best accords with the occasion or with the object principally intended—at one time using the comparison of the potter and his clay, to assert God's absolute creative power and disposing providence—at another representing him as exhorting, arguing, expostulating, striving with his creatures, vexed at their perverseness, anxious for their restoration, affording them the means of return, grieved at their neglect of him, and rejoicing in their recovery. To oppose these passages

in hostile array one against the other, has not the slightest tendency to resolve the question. They are all just what by the very nature of the question we might expect to find in Scripture. Even the Deist, who admits the doctrine of a Providence and of Free-will, having accustomed his mind to acquiesce in the mysterious truth, has no pretence for objecting to the *analogous* difficulties involved in the language of Scripture—much less should the sincere and devout Christian be offended at these difficulties, or presumptuously attempt to establish one point by weakening the other. On the contrary, as we have frequently observed, and as the excellent author of the *Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed* demonstrates in full detail, *these very circumstances* are evidence in favour of Revelation, and ought to dispose our minds to receive it—for if either of the doctrines in question were absent, or so stated as to be destructive of the other, Revelation would offer much greater violence to our intellectual faculties than it now does, and would contradict

many conclusions which to our natural reason appear most certain^f.

Much doubtless of the error which is afloat in the world on these subjects arises from not bearing steadily in mind that all the words and forms of speaking applied to the Deity, being borrowed from other objects, cannot adequately describe his nature and proceedings. They are the best means, indeed the only means we have of expressing our thoughts upon this subject at all, but they ought never to be used without a reverential sense of their imperfection—and the rule

‘If,’ says Archbishop King, ‘we take these as schemes designed to give us different *views* of God, and his *trans-* actions with men, in order to oblige us to distinct *duties* which we owe him, and stretch them no farther, they are very reconcileable : and to go about to clash the one against the other, and argue, as many do, that if the one be true the other cannot, is full as absurd as to object against that Article of our Belief that Christ sits on the right hand of God, because Scripture in other places and plain reason assures us, that God hath neither hands nor parts.’ *Sermon on Predestination*, §. 27.

of interpreting them always as *relative* to ourselves is an admirable preservative against many mistakes and perplexities, into which men are led by a critical analysis of scriptural terms. It is to teach *us* how to feel and act towards God, not to explain *his* nature that such words are chosen. If he is said to be *angry*—it is that we may feel it our interest to endeavour to please him. If he is described as *unchangeable*—it is that we may not indulge the weak imagination of eluding, surprising, or finding him capricious and careless, as *men* often are, forgetful of their purpose, and less peremptory at one time than another. If *he* is said to pity and repent, it is that we may neglect nothing which we should do in a case of distress to make a *man* pity and repent.

The scholastic rule is no bad one for the interpretation of such language, *Affectus in Deo denotant effectum*. When the *effect* is the same which certain passions would naturally lead to in men, we speak of it as proceeding from the same *cause*: but nothing would be more absurd, as well as impious,

than because the name of a certain passion is employed in these cases, to pursue the investigation farther, analysing the elements, the motives, the objects of that passion in men, and drawing inferences from hence concerning the divine nature and dispensations. / Is it for us to say, 'that in the purpose of God the operation of many simple elements, co-existent in the same mind, is combined—that there are leadings and leanings in his mind to the point and on the side of mercy—but those leadings and leanings are counteracted and over-ruled—his *whole* mind, his mind *in action*, is against such exercise of mercy?' This language, taken from one of the advocates of Calvinism, places in a strong light the danger of attempting to be wise above what is written—and the boldness with which things that the angels desire to look into, are in this manner treated, as if they were the proper subject of human argumentation, is no slight evidence of the unsoundness of those opinions which it is employed in supporting.

* Vaughan's Defence of the Calvinistic Clergy, p. 110.

In the same spirit it is said, with the most peremptory confidence, that 'whatever *may be* and *is*, *must be*^b—that 'to talk of *permission* is to call God imperfect'—that 'what he foresees and knows and has the power to hinder but does not, that he must be said 'to ordain'^c—that 'either God was counter-acted and overreached, or that he ordained the fall'^d—that to say he *permitted* the fall 'is a foolish term—he *ordained* the fall that 'he might get himself glory out of it'.

The majority, I am aware, of those who are now called Calvinists condemn this doctrine in the strongest terms, as tending to deny the moral attributes of the Deity, and to make God the author of sin: but the same reason ought surely to be allowed to operate against that construction of divine *counsels* and *decrees*, which not only regards all human actions as necessary, but represents certain individuals only as eternally elected to salvation, and certain others unal-

^b Ibid. p. 91. ^c P. 75. ^d Ibid. ^e P. 121.

terably excluded or passed over. The advocate for the former doctrine is at least consistent when he says 'there is no resting place between Supralapsarianism and Socinianism'—and that in all cases 'such was the *design* of God, for such is the actual *result*.' But if we disallow this inference where it contradicts the revealed attributes of God, although we must be content to leave the mystery unexplained, why may it not with as little scruple be disallowed, where it militates against express declarations of holy Scripture, and is utterly inconsistent with the plain and unsophisticated notion which all mankind have of the act of *prayer*?

So far indeed is it from being the rule of interpreting Scripture to infer *design* whenever an *event* is related or foretold, that it has even long been recognized as an established principle among biblical critics to *invert* this rule, where the context or the subject matter seemed to require it: that is,

▪ Vaughan, p. 119.

to interpret many passages in which a form of speech usually expressive of *design* is employed, as if the purpose merely was to set forth the actual *event*. For example,

‘ I am not come to send peace on earth, but a sword^a.’

Does the Calvinist himself understand these words as equally expressive of our Lord’s *design*, with that benevolent declaration,

‘ The Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them^o?’

Or again, in those numerous passages which point out the fulfilment of prophecy under the customary form, ‘ That it *might be* fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet,’ does he object to the obvious and ordinary interpretation, ‘ Then *was* fulfilled^p?’

^a Matt. x. 34.

^o Luke ix. 56.

^p See Matt. ii. 23. xiii. 35. xxvii. 35. John xv. 25. xvii. 12. xix. 24. It is worthy of remark, that the frequent use of *shall* for *will* in our Bible translation favours the Calvinistic interpretation of prophecy, and gives the appearance of an authoritative decree to many passages which simply announce what is about to happen. But this use

Innumerable are the difficulties which the language of Scripture presents similar to that which has been just considered, and which often cause uneasiness in the minds of those who still resist the Calvinistic interpretation. But in general, I believe, they will be sufficiently lightened, if not wholly removed, by observing the principle before maintained—that God is revealed to us not as he is *absolutely* in himself, but *relatively* to ourselves—and that the terms employed are such as clearly to indicate not his nature and essence, but the duties which belong to us arising out of that *relation*. A sentiment, which cannot be conveyed in plainer or better words than in those of Luther; ‘To

of the word *shall* is no evidence of the opinions of the Bible translators one way or the other, if it be true, which I have heard asserted by a very competent judge, that the word *will* is never used in that translation as the sign of the future tense merely, but that when employed it always denotes *volition*. The extended use of the word *will* to express simple futurity seems to be one of the changes our language has undergone during the last two centuries.

In the same spirit it is said, with the most peremptory confidence, that 'whatever *may be* and *is*, *must be*^b—that 'to talk of *permission* is to call God imperfect'—that 'what he foresees and knows and has the power to hinder but does not, that he must be said 'to ordain'^c—that 'either God was counter-acted and overreached, or that he ordained the fall'^d—that to say he *permitted* the fall 'is a foolish term—he *ordained* the fall that 'he might get himself glory out of it!'

The majority, I am aware, of those who are now called Calvinists condemn this doctrine in the strongest terms, as tending to deny the moral attributes of the Deity, and to make God the author of sin: but the same reason ought surely to be allowed to operate against that construction of divine *counsels* and *decrees*, which not only regards all human actions as necessary, but represents certain individuals only as eternally elected to salvation, and certain others unal-

^b Ibid. p. 91. ^c P. 75. ^d Ibid. ^e P. 121.

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‘know,’ says he, ‘any thing of God other-
 ‘wise than as revealed in Scripture—what
 ‘his nature is, what he does, or what he
 ‘wills—belongs not to me: my business is
 ‘to know what are his precepts, his promises,
 ‘and his threatenings.’ To which he adds,
 with a simplicity and energy of language
 hardly attainable in translation, *Hæc cum*
*meditaris studiosè, INVENIS DEUM*¹.

Nor can we adopt a better practical rule
 to prevent the application of these *relative*
 terms from being pushed too far, than to
 check it, the moment we perceive that it
 begins to trench upon any of the revealed
 attributes of God—such as his justice, his
 goodness, his mercy—or to contradict any
 positive declaration of his will. ‘No man
 ‘knoweth the Father but the Son, and he
 ‘to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.’
 [It were well, if this rule, which was conti-
 nually present to Luther’s mind’, were more

¹ Op. vol. vi. p. 204.

‘Nemo igitur de *divinitate nuda* cogitet, sed has cogi-
 ‘tationes fugiat, tanquam infernum, et ipsissimas Satanæ
 ‘tentationes.’ Op. vol. vi. p. 92. ‘Attende et vide, ne
 ‘tibi excidat, *quod sæpe dixi*, quomodo Christus his verbis

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observed than it is by Christian divines. We should not then be offended, as we often are, by a boldness of language when speaking of the nature of the Deity, which a prudent naturalist avoids in the investigation even of the meanest of his creatures'.

Before we close this part of the enquiry, it may be well briefly to advert to the argu-

' sui et patris cognitionem conjungit et complicat, ita ut
' *solum per Christum et in Christo Pater cognoscatur*. Si-
' quidem hoc sæpe dixi, quod iterum atque iterum repe-
' tens dico, quod etiam, me mortuo, omnibus in memoria
' hæreere velim, ut omnes doctores non secus atque dia-
' bolum caveamus, qui sublimibus illis articulis de Deo
' docere incipiunt *nudè et sine Christo*. Sicut hactenus
' in Academiis sophistæ et magistri nostri fecerunt, specu-
' lando de suis [ipsius] operibus in cælo, *quid esset, quid*
' *cogitaret, quid faceret apud seipsum,*' &c. ' Sed si secure
' agere volueris, et Deum apprehendere, tum nemini
' credas Deum te alibi quam in Christo reperturum.' Op.
vol. v. p. 192.. Quoted by Dr. Laurence in his notes to
the Bampton Lectures, Sermon vii.

* See particularly Cudworth's *Immutable Morality*, chap. iii. The language of Clarke also, in his *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*, is often too peremptory and irreverent on such a subject.

ment often derived in support of the predestinarian hypothesis, from the fulfilment of *prophecy*.

Here they say we are not left to infer from the nature of God that he *foreknows* what will be done, he actually *foretels* it—and then it must come to pass, or God would be the author of a lie.

Now the first answer to this argument is the same with that already given to the argument drawn from the foreknowledge of God—prophecy being only the *declaration* of that which cannot ever have been unknown to God, whether declared or not. If therefore his *knowledge* is not to be regarded as imposing constraint or necessity on the events themselves, his *declaring* that knowledge makes no conceivable difference. One of the important ends of prophecy is to confirm our faith, and to fill us with an awful sense of the attention with which the Almighty regards human affairs. ‘I told you, that when the time cometh, ye may remember that I told you of them.’ That the assertions also are free from error,

that the prophecy will not fail of being accomplished, we admit—but the prediction is not the *efficient cause* of its being accomplished, any more than the knowledge is, of which the prophecy is the mere enunciation. The *effects* arise from that free agency of man which is not compelled to act, but which in following the dictates of his own will is made to further the gracious designs of God for the welfare of his Church. And thus, the conqueror or the tyrant, ‘though he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, although it be in his heart to cut off and to destroy nations not a few,’ yet often becomes the predicted instrument for chastising a sinful people, or for introducing some ulterior plan of restoration and mercy.

It is with this, as with most other speculative disputes, a laxity in the use of language introduces confusion into our thoughts. We have before observed, that *impossible* is often said of things merely because *no doubt*

* Isa. x. 7.

can reasonably be entertained concerning them, although they may lie within the compass of *powers* well known to exist. The same holds good of many other phrases expressive of necessity, by which, if we examine them more closely, we find that nothing like *compulsion* or physical necessity is intended, but merely an intimate connexion and coherence with something else. Thus the dependence of a conclusion on its premises in most languages is denoted by the same terms which express physical necessity: and the close correspondence between a prophecy and its accomplishment (two things which are often widely separated in point of time) is in the same manner frequently forced upon our notice. That the prophecy should be fulfilled is to human apprehension a necessary *consequence* of its being delivered: and the delivery of a prophecy is a conclusive *reason* why we may believe and assert that the thing predicted will come to pass—but that the prophecy is the *cause* of its own fulfilment, or that the delivery of it makes it impossible for the particular agents who

fulfil it to do otherwise, are conclusions wholly unwarranted by such a mode of speaking.

[How absurd, for instance, would it be to assert that Peter's denial was made inevitable by our Lord's prophecy; when, humanly speaking, instead of contributing towards it, the utterance of the prophecy was the likeliest way to frustrate its own completion. But yet it may be said to follow as a *logical consequence* from the assertion of the foreknowledge and veracity of God, (taking these terms precisely as they are applied to human nature,) that this prophecy *must* be accomplished. *We* may be certain that the thing will happen, and then (as was before observed) the *thing* itself is by a metonymy called *certain*—but in reality the thing remains as it was before, no efficient causes being set in action but those which would have acted had no such prophecy been delivered.

* One of the most remarkable passages in which the language of Scripture expresses this necessity is in St. John's Gospel. 'Therefore they could not believe, be-

And here in the last place let me observe, that whatever *certainty* we may justly feel that the word of God pronounced by his prophets will be accomplished, whatever terms denoting *necessity* may be employed to link

‘cause that Esaias saith again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.’ John xii. 39. Upon which Bishop Tomline well observes, ‘The things did not happen because they were foretold, but they were for the wisest purposes foretold because it was foreseen that they would happen.’

As a curious proof how offensive to our natural and unbiassed judgment it is to confound the ideas of foreseeing and influencing an event, let me produce the remarks of some of Milton’s commentators upon the line

Or aught by me immutably foreseen. *Par. Lost*, iii. 121.

Bentley, struck with the manifest incongruity, proposes to read *immutably foredoomed*. Pearce says of Bentley, ‘His objection is right but his emendation is wrong,’ and proposes,

Or aught by me *immutable* foreseen.

Newton with better judgment retains the original reading, and observes, ‘*Immutably foreseen* seems to mean ‘so foreseen as to be immutable.’

these things together—and doubtless there is nothing in the constitution of nature more necessary than this connexion—yet God himself has plainly shewn that HE will be tied down by no such verbal restraints in his dealings towards men—that even the formal denunciation of his vengeance shall not shut out all hope of mercy from the guilty in this life, nor forbid the penitent sinner to seek a revocation of his sentence by means of prayer. What could be more peremptory than the condemnation pronounced against Ahab by the prophet Elijah? Yet upon his sincere repentance and humiliation the terms of the sentence were mitigated by God's express authority, and the cause of that mitigation was declared. So again, after Hezekiah in his sickness had been told *by the word of the Lord* 'to set his house in order, for that he 'should die and not live', yet was a remission of this sentence granted to his intense supplication flowing from the heart. 'And 'the Lord said, I have heard thy prayer, I

* 2 Kings xx. 1.

‘ have seen thy tears : behold, I will heal
 ‘ thee.’

It may be replied, by way of shewing the difficulty of obtaining such a revocation, that even in this case the alteration of the laws of nature is represented as an easier matter—that the shadow of the sun-dial went back, as an evidence that God’s word would thus be recalled. It is not however the *easiness* of this proceeding for which I contend, but its *practicability*. There is a faith which can remove mountains : and against that faith it is presumptuous and unwarrantable in man to oppose any obstacle as insuperable, or any *decrees* of God as unalterably binding.

It is impossible indeed for language to be more explicit or more authoritative than the revelation made to the Church on this very point by the prophet Jeremiah.

‘ Then the *word of the Lord came unto me*,
 saying,

‘ O house of Israel, cannot I do with you
 ‘ as this potter ? saith the Lord. Behold, as
 ‘ the clay is in the potter’s hand, so are ye
 ‘ in mine hand, O house of Israel.

‘ At what instant I shall *speak* concerning
 ‘ a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to
 ‘ pluck up, and to pull down, and to de-
 ‘ stroy it ;

‘ If that nation against whom *I have pro-
 ‘ nounced* turn from their evil, I will repent
 ‘ of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

‘ And at what instant I shall *speak* con-
 ‘ cerning a nation, and concerning a king-
 ‘ dom, to build and to plant it ;

‘ If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not
 ‘ my voice, then I will repent of the good,
 ‘ wherewith I *said* I would benefit them.’

The examples of this procedure on the
 part of the Almighty as revealed in Scrip-
 ture are not numerous, but they are decisive
 of the question. ‘ Yet forty days,’ said the
 prophet Jonah, ‘ and Nineveh shall be over-
 ‘ thrown.’ But the whole city repented—
 ‘ And God saw their works, that they turned
 ‘ from their evil way ; and God repented of
 ‘ the evil that he had *said* that he would do
 ‘ unto them ; and he *did* it not.’ Surely
 these things ‘ happened unto them for en-

‘samples, and were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are ‘come’.’ The prophet who was made the herald of this divine decree, and whose words were not verified in the event, yielded to the infirmity of human nature—‘it displeased him exceedingly’ that God spared the city, ‘and he was very angry’.^a But God instructed him, provoked and mortified as he was, that he *willeth not* the death of a sinner—and that no thoughts or reasonings of ours can prescribe bounds to the divine mercy.

☞ And let those of the Christian Church who, while they support the doctrine of absolute decrees and appeal to the express declarations of Scripture as the grounds of their opinion, fancy that they are jealous for the honour of God, lest his word should seem to be made of none effect—let them look well to their own hearts, that no secret jealousy for their own credit, no pride of intellect, no presumption in the powers of reason, and no obstinacy in adhering to what they have

^a 1 Cor. x. 11. ^a Jonah iv. 1.

once pronounced to be demonstrable, lurk there, and give a bias to their minds on these questions. Above all, let them remember, that the boundless extent of God's mercy, and of his love for mankind, has been manifested to human eyes in a spectacle far more instructive and affecting than the worm and the gourd of Jonah—and that for us to grudge the communication of that mercy to any one of his creatures, or to regard it as shackled by any antecedent decrees and declarations, is still more at variance with the proofs he has given, that he *willeth* not that any should perish, and that in every nation he that *feareth* him and *worketh* righteousness, is, through *faith* in the merits of Christ, accepted with him.]



NOTES TO DISCOURSE III.



A GREAT part of the argument of the preceding Discourse is so nearly coincident with that maintained in the valuable Sermon of Archbishop King on Predestination and Foreknowledge*, that I cannot omit the opportunity thus afforded me of recommending that treatise to all students who have been conscious to themselves of any confusion or perplexity upon these subjects. It has indeed been the practice of the most eminent divines to dissuade us from entering far into such abstruse speculations, induced by a reasonable disgust of the manner in which topics of that sacred nature are too often handled, and by a disapprobation of many consequences which seemed plausibly enough to be connected with each opinion, when peremptorily maintained. Passages to this effect from the writings of Luther have been already produced. And it appears that our own Reformers, especially Cranmer and Ridley, were of the same opinion.

* Preached before the House of Lords in Ireland, A. D. 1709, annexed to his Work on the Origin of Evil.

‘Sudden changes,’ said Ridley, ‘without substantial and necessary cause, and *the heady setting forth of extremities*, I did never love.’ As to Ridley, it is clearly proved by Dr. Laurence, in his Introduction to the treatises before mentioned, that Bradford could not obtain from him that approval and sanction which he importunately desired, of his own doctrines on Predestination. Bradford’s tract is written in the high and confident strain of the Calvinistic school. A copy of this he had sent to Ridley when in prison at Oxford, soliciting at the same time some public declaration of his opinion upon these points. Ridley answered with mildness and moderation—not declining the task for want of leisure, or want of inclination to employ his mind in labours of this kind, but evidently unwilling to pronounce a peremptory opinion upon matters so mysterious, and so far elevated above the sphere of our conceptions. ‘Sir,’ he says, ‘*in these matters I am so fearful, that I dare not speak farther, yea almost none otherwise, than the text doth (as it were) lead me by the hand*.’^b

Now the excellence of Archbishop King’s argument consists in explaining the grounds and reasons of this wise caution. 1. He observes that the nature of God is universally agreed to be incomprehensible by human

^a Letter to West, in the Martyr’s Letters, p. 40.

^b Martyr’s Letters, p. 65.

understanding—that the descriptions we frame to ourselves of God or of the divine attributes are not taken from any direct and immediate perceptions that we have of him or them, but from observations we have made of his works; and from the consideration of those qualities which we conceive would enable us to perform the like. In this way we ascribe *wisdom* and *foresight* to him, because he does what cannot be performed by us without the help of those faculties. That these faculties in him are of a nature different from our own we must be very sensible—but because of the similarity of their effects we give them the same name.

2. After the same manner the language of Scripture ascribes hands, feet, and eyes, to God; and although in this case it is universally allowed that the terms are metaphorical, yet the principle of the application is the same as in the former case.

3. Passions also are attributed to God, bearing the same name with human passions, not that we believe God to be really subject to mental perturbation, but because the effects upon mankind are similar to those which are produced by such passions in ourselves.

4. The powers and operations of our minds are likewise ascribed to God in the same way of comparison or analogy. Purpose, contrivance, counsel, design, decree, are all attributed to him, because things appear to be done or directed by him, which among men proceed from such causes: but a very

slight reflection teaches us, that these terms, which are suitable enough to human proceedings, are all imperfect expressions when applied to God; helping us only to form some notions, but those faint and inadequate, of his divine perfection.

They are not to be understood then in their literal sense as *direct* and *proper* appellations; and we ought never to pursue these comparisons farther than the occasion on which they are used requires; nor draw positive conclusions from such premises as if the terms were in themselves proper and thoroughly understood. In like manner when speaking of our own minds, because we use the words, *weigh*, *penetrate*, *reflect*, which are all expressions borrowed from matter, it would be equally absurd to carry on the comparison into all other particulars of those actions—and to suppose that weighing a thing in our minds must have all the effects, and be accompanied with all the circumstances, that are observable in weighing a body^c.

The important use made by the author of this doctrine is, 1st, to check presumption and irreverence towards the Almighty when we converse and reason about these matters; and, 2dly, to reconcile us to those seeming contradictions in Scripture, which have given birth to angry disputes among Christians, but which, if duly interpreted according to this rule,

^c Sermon, p. 11, 12.

ought no more to surprise us than when we read in one place of God's *repenting*, and in another that he *does not* repent.

It is impossible to peruse this Sermon without being struck with the candour and moderation of the writer. Free from attachment to any system or to any party, truth seems to be his only object: and with the usual fate of those who write on this principle, he has been made the object of attack by the eager partizans of both sides in the Calvinistic controversy.

He has been accused by Arminians as well as Calvinists of denying the *moral attributes* of the Deity—and by some of denying even the *being* of a God.

The author of the latter accusation is Dr. John Edwards, a learned divine of that age, who published an answer to the Archbishop's Sermon, written with all the bitterness and insolence usual in such contentions, but which was in this case entirely unprovoked, as the Sermon is wholly free from those charges against the Calvinistic opinions, which are commonly alledged by the Arminians with so much heat and asperity: and the great object of the writer is, not only to satisfy humble and pious minds, but to restrain the animosities of both parties, and to shew the unreasonableness of their mutual accusations.

This however will not satisfy a professed controversialist, as Edwards was. He endeavours therefore to prove, that because the Archbishop speaks of the

intellectual and moral attributes of the Deity as only known to us by analogy and as being named accordingly, he does in effect resolve the whole of religion into *figure*, and denies the *real nature* of these things, as much as he denies bodily parts and passions. According to this plan, the Church of England might, he says, as well have described God to be without wisdom, knowledge, goodness, and justice, as without body, parts, and passions—and when we have stripped the notion of God of these attributes, and reduced it to *the general cause of all effects*, we are in fact no better than Atheists.

This objection the Author had himself anticipated, and has provided what to many readers will appear to be a sufficient answer. He observes, ‘The common
‘ use of figures is to represent things that are other-
‘ wise very well known, in such a manner as may
‘ magnify or lessen, heighten or adorn, the ideas we
‘ have of them. And the design of putting them in
‘ this foreign dress, as we may call it, is to move our
‘ passions, and engage our fancies more effectually
‘ than the true and naked view of them is apt to do,
‘ or perhaps ought. And from hence it too often
‘ happens, that these figures are employed to deceive
‘ us, and make us think better or worse of things than
‘ they really deserve.

‘ But the analogies and similitudes that the holy
‘ Scriptures or our own reason frame of divine things,
‘ are of another nature; the use of them is to give us
‘ some notion of things whereof we have no direct

‘ knowledge, and by that means lead us to perception
 ‘ of the nature, or at least of some of the properties
 ‘ and effects of what our understandings cannot di-
 ‘ rectly reach ; and in this case to teach us how we
 ‘ are to behave ourselves towards God, and what we
 ‘ are to do, in order to obtain a more perfect know-
 ‘ ledge of his attributes.

‘ And whereas in ordinary *figurative* representa-
 ‘ tions, the thing expressed by the figure is commonly
 ‘ of much less moment than that to which it is com-
 ‘ pared ; in these *analogies* the case is otherwise, and
 ‘ the things represented by them have *much more*
 ‘ *reality and perfection* in them, than the things by
 ‘ which we represent them. Thus, weighing a thing
 ‘ in our minds is a much more noble and perfect
 ‘ action than examining the gravity of a body by sale
 ‘ and balance, which is the original notion from
 ‘ whence it is borrowed; and reflection, as in our un-
 ‘ derstandings, is much more considerable than the
 ‘ rebounding of one hard body from another, which
 ‘ yet is the literal sense of reflection. And after the
 ‘ same manner, what we call knowledge and fore-
 ‘ knowledge in God, have infinitely *more reality* in
 ‘ them, and are of greater moment than our under-
 ‘ standing or prescience, from whence they are trans-
 ‘ ferred to him; and in truth these, as in man, are
 ‘ but faint communications of the divine perfections,
 ‘ which are the true originals, and which our powers
 ‘ and faculties more imperfectly imitate, than a picture

‘does a man: and yet if we reason from them *by analogy and proportion*, they are sufficient to give us such a notion of God’s attributes, as will oblige us to fear, love, obey, and adore him^d.’

But as the objection continues to be urged by many who are not infected with the spirit of controversy, and who seriously think that the honour of God is impaired by this explanation, it may be well to examine the question more in detail. Indeed this examination is the more necessary, because the words *analogy* and *resemblance*, about which the whole question turns, are used loosely and indiscriminately, not only in popular discourse, but by philosophical and scientific writers of modern times; and even by the author himself they are not employed with sufficient precision upon so nice a point.

Analogy does not mean the similarity of two *things*, but the similarity, or sameness, of two *relations*. There must be more than two *things* to give rise to two *relations*: there must be at least three; and in most cases there are four. Thus A may be *like* B, but there is no *analogy* between A and B: it is an abuse of the word to speak so, and it leads to much confusion of thought. If A has the same relation to B which C has to D, then there is an analogy. If the first relation be well known, it may serve to explain the second, which is less known: and the transfer of name

^d P. 29.

from one of the terms in the relation best known to its corresponding term in the other, causes no confusion, but on the contrary tends to remind us of the similarity that exists in these relations; and so assists the mind instead of misleading it.

In this manner things most *unlike* and discordant in their nature may be strictly *analogous* to one another. Thus a certain *proposition* may be called the *basis* of a system. The proposition is to the system what the basis is to a building. It serves a similar office and purpose: and this last relation being well known is of use to illustrate the other which was less known. E. g. The system *rests* upon it: it is *useless to proceed* with the argument till this is well established: if this were *removed*, the system must fall. The only cautions requisite in the use of this kind of analogy are, **FIRST**, not to proceed to a comparison of the corresponding terms as they are intrinsically *in themselves* or in their own nature, but merely as they are *in relation* to the other terms respectively; and, **SECONDLY**, not to presume that because the relation is the same or similar in one or two points, therefore it is the same or similar in all.

The **FIRST** of these errors cannot be committed in the instance before us, because the two things are of such different natures that they have no one point of resemblance. But when the first and the third term are not only corresponding in relation, but chance also to be of a kindred nature, or when, from the

circumstance of one being visible and the other invisible, their discrepancies do not strike us, it often happens that a comparison is pursued between the *things themselves*, and this is one cause of the promiscuous use of the terms *similitude* and *analogy*. As for example, when Locke, having once established the comparison, proceeds to talk of Ideas as if they were really images in the mind, or traces in the brain.

It is from observing this tendency in men to regard the metaphorical or analogous name as bringing along with it something of the nature of the thing it originally signified, that Mr. Stewart is led to make the remark not less original than just, that it is well for the understanding, though it may be a loss to the fancy, when a metaphorical word has lost its pedigree^d—that is, when it no longer excites the primary idea denoted by it, and is reduced by custom to a plain and direct appellation in its secondary sense. He suggests also^e with equal ingenuity, in cases where words have not yet been worn down to this use, the

^d Philosophical Essays, Ess. v. c. 3.

^e Ibid. In the analysis here given of *analogy*, it will be perceived by those who are conversant with Mr. Stewart's writings, that I have ventured to depart widely from his use of the word. Indeed M. Prevot's etymology, as given in a passage quoted with approbation by Mr. Stewart, vol. ii. c. iv. sect. 4. appears to me quite erroneous. 'Le mot Analogie, dans l'origine, n'exprime que la ressemblance.' The reverse of which I take to be the fact. But this is not the place for entering farther into the discussion.

expedient of *varying* our metaphor when speaking of the same subject, as a preservative against this dangerous and encroaching error. Of the utility of this practice I have no doubt: and I think it may be regarded as an advantage of the same kind, that the parables of the New Testament are drawn from such a great diversity of objects, as to check the propensity in man, especially in matters of religion, to attach some mystical character to the images so employed, and to look upon them as emblems possessing an intrinsic virtue, or at least a secret affinity with those spiritual truths, to the illustration of which they are made subservient.

When the points in which this similarity of relation holds are of secondary importance—when instead of being essential and characteristic, they are slight and superficial—the analogy is often called a metaphor, and often a similitude, as being addressed rather to the fancy than to the judgment, and intended rather to adorn and illustrate, than to explain. But it would perhaps be better to avoid the name *similitude* in these cases, and to regard them as being, what they really are, *analogies*, although subsisting in points of inferior moment.

Thus when the swallow is called the herald of summer, or a ship is said to plough the waves, it is easy to resolve the phrase into the form of analogy or proportion: the swallow is to the summer what the

herald is to his prince; he announces his approach. So the action of a ship is to the sea, what the action of a plough is to the land. But because in these cases the relation is *fanciful* rather than *real*, that is, it consists not in essential points but in mere circumstances of inferior importance, we leave such things to the province of taste or amusement, and no considerate man ever attempts to reason from them.

‘I am not of the mind of those speculators,’ said Mr. Burke, ‘who seem assured that all states have the same period of infancy, manhood, and decrepitude, that are found in individuals. Parallels of this sort rather furnish similitudes to illustrate or to adorn, than supply analogies from whence to reason. The objects which are attempted to be forced into an analogy are not found in the same classes of existence. Individuals are physical beings—common-wealths are not physical but moral essences’.

A remarkable example of this kind is that argument of Toplady against free-will, who, after quoting the text *Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house*^f, triumphantly exclaims, ‘This is giving free-will a stab under the fifth rib: for can stones hew themselves, and build themselves into a regular house^h?’

^f *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, p. 4.

^g 1 Pet. ii. 5.

^h *Christian and Philosophical Necessity Asserted*, p. 56.

Even when we attribute to inanimate things the qualities of animals, the same analysis may be adopted as before. Thus the *rage* of the *sea* denotes a similarity of effect to the effect of rage in animals. This is even more the work of fancy than the example before given: for in reducing it to the form of a proportion, *one term* is wholly supplied by the imagination. We do not really believe there is a principle in the sea producing these effects, answering to rage in animals, but the imagination suggests such a principle, and transfers the name of rage to it.

In those cases where the analogy is traced between things *perfectly heterogeneous* there is little danger of confounding the idea with that of similitude. But when the subjects we are comparing are of a *kindred nature*, so that the things spoken of not only stand in the same relation, but also bear a close resemblance to each other, then it is we are most apt to confound them together, and to substitute resemblance for analogy. Thus because the heart or the tooth of an animal not only serves the same office to the animal that the heart or the tooth of a man does to him, but is also an object very nearly resembling it in structure and outward appearance, we are apt to imagine that the same name is given to it solely on this last account. But if we pursue the enquiry throughout the animal creation, we shall find that the form of the corresponding parts is infinitely varied, although the

analogy remains the same ; till at length we arrive at such diversities, that it is only persons conversant in comparative anatomy who can readily detect the analogy. And long before the difference has reached this length, in popular discourse the analogical name is dropped, and the scientific use of it in such cases sounds pedantic to unlearned ears. Thus the beak of a bird answers to the tooth of man, and the shell of a lobster to the bones of other animals. If the use and office remain the same, no diversity of form impairs the analogy: but we ought from such examples to learn even when similitude of form *does* exist, not to regard it as the true ground of the comparison we make, and of our affixing the same name.

Thus too when we speak of *qualities* of things which are not cognizable by our senses except in their effects, we bestow the same name on account of a real or supposed analogy, not on account of any similarity in the qualities themselves, which may or may not exist *according as the things we speak of are more or less of a kindred nature*. Sagacity, courage, fidelity, love, jealousy, revenge, are all predicated of brute animals not less than of man, although they are not things or existences in themselves, but certain attributes or affections in them, exhibiting symptoms and producing effects corresponding with the symptoms and effects attendant upon those qualities in ourselves. In these instances, *still more* than in the former, we are prone to confound analogy with re-

semblance—because as these things have no form or existence of their own—as the whole essence of them consists in their relation to something else—if the *relations* be alike, the *things* are necessarily alike, and we naturally slide into that form of speaking which makes no distinction between analogy and resemblance: but even then we regard the *qualities* as identical, only in proportion as the *nature* of the respective subjects to which they belong may be regarded as the same.

The SECOND error above noticed, as carefully to be avoided in the use of analogy is, when we do not indeed treat the corresponding terms as *resembling one another* in their own nature, but when we presume that a similarity of relation subsists in *other points* besides those which are the foundation of the analogy.

When the analogy consists in slight or superficial circumstances, still more when it is fanciful only, no attempt whatever should be made to reason from it; as was exemplified in the passage produced from Burke's writings: but even when the analogy is solid and well-founded we are liable to fall into error, if we suppose it to extend farther than it really does. Errors of this nature are often committed by men of lively fancies, or of ardent minds, and they are the more seducing because they set out not only with a shew of reason, but with reason and truth actually on their side.

Thus because a just analogy has been discerned between the metropolis of a country, and the heart in the animal body, it has been sometimes contended that its increased size is a disease—that it may impede some its most important functions—or even be the means of its dissolution.

Another frequent example of this *second* error is found in the use of the same titles of office or dignity in different nations or in distant times. Although the relation denoted by them be the same in one or in several important particulars, yet it scarcely ever holds throughout; and the most false notions are in consequence entertained by people of the nature of these corresponding offices in every country but their own. We have known what mischief has been produced by the adoption of the phrase, ‘servant of the people,’ although it cannot be denied that in some points the duty of the magistrate is the same as the duty of a servant—that his time for instance, his thoughts, his abilities, should be devoted to the benefit of the people—and again, on the other hand, because the duty of a subject towards his sovereign coincides in many respects with the duty of a child towards his parent, some speculative writers have hastily concluded that the institution of monarchy is equally founded in nature, and possesses the same inherent authority with the parental.

But as it is the *first* error out of which the present discussion arises, I will dwell no longer upon this head.

Having thus endeavoured to fix the true notion of *analogy*, let us apply it to the question under consideration.

In the first place, when we speak of the *eye*, the *arm*, the *hand* of God, all are agreed in regarding these as purely analogical expressions—not indicating any resemblance in the things spoken of, but simply denoting that we recognize in God faculties analogous to those signified by these words, but of a nature wholly different.

In the second place, when we ascribe *anger*, *jealousy*, *repentance*, *revenge*, to God, we are never supposed to mean more than that his dealings will be to us such as proceed from these passions in men. It is not even pretended that there are qualities in his nature similar to these qualities in us, but the analogy is founded only upon the relation of cause and effect. The analogy is not indeed altogether fanciful, as when we speak of the rage of the sea. God is still regarded as an *agent*; but having no word to denote the active cause in him, we borrow the word which belongs to the cause of these effects in men.

Thirdly, when we speak of the *wisdom* and *knowledge* of God, his *justice*, *mercy*, *love*, *long-suffering*, the process is precisely similar to that before described. There are effects continually coming under our notice which indicate these qualities in men, and from a view of *effects* similar to these in the system of

the universe we suppose corresponding *qualities* in the Author of that system, and accordingly bestow upon them the same name.

In the *first* and *second* of these cases, hardly any difference of opinion exists among Christians. We discover indeed the natural propensity of mankind towards the confusion above mentioned, in the instance of the *Anthropo-morphites*, and in those fictitious deities of the heathen world to whom all the infirmities of human nature belonged. It is however only in the *last* of the three cases, that any serious controversy now arises—and because the qualities here spoken of are such as we esteem and admire among men, it has been thought not only allowable to indulge the notion of their being really *like* to the corresponding qualities in God, but to deny this resemblance has been called impious and atheistical.

The charge has been alledged too against writers who, like Archbishop King, assert in the strongest terms their belief in the superior excellence of the divine nature, and who call any qualities that are estimable and praiseworthy in man, dim shadows and faint communications of those attributes which exist in God in complete and adorable perfection.

But if we examine the question attentively, it will perhaps be found that the objection arises not so much from a jealousy for the honour of God, to which it pretends, as from a jealousy for the honour

of man. It has been before observed, that analogy may be perfect where there is no resemblance, that is, where the corresponding terms are wholly heterogeneous—and that resemblance takes place in proportion as the objects denoted by those terms are of a kindred nature. Because therefore the nature of man partakes both of matter, and of passions, we instantly discard all such ideas when speaking of God, and look upon the words expressive of *them* as simply analogous. What ground have we then for pursuing a different course with the words expressive of *intellectual* and *moral* attributes, except that we conceive a similarity in the *nature* of man and of God in these respects, and are unwilling to relinquish so exalted a pretension? But whatever ground there may be for this notion in the Scriptural phrase *image of God*, there is surely more than enough both in reason and in Scripture to repress the rash supposition, that we are justified in reasoning upon his nature, as we would upon our own: that is, in drawing inferences from those attributes in him which we call wisdom, justice, mercy, with the same confidence that we do from those qualities in ourselves, as if the words were expressive of the *same determinate notion* which we annex to them when speaking of ourselves. Even in our own nature we have very imperfect ideas of these qualities. They appear often to interfere with one another, and opinions differ as to the occasions in which each ought to prevail. Nothing indeed is more common

in criticism than the remark, that if one virtuous quality be much heightened, it must be at the expence of another ; and that a perfect mixture not only never existed, but that it cannot even be described or represented. But of this we are sure, that whatever is really valuable or excellent in ourselves, exists in an infinite degree of excellence in God ; and it is only in so far as we have any thing good in us, that we venture to transfer and appropriate to his nature the language proper to our own.

That such is the cause of the jealousy expressed by many on this subject, is rendered more probable by observing what takes place in the comparison of ourselves with the lower animals. We make no scruple to call their parts and passions by the same names with our own—but an unwillingness is often observable among men to bestow upon any of their qualities the titles *intellectual* and *moral*, or to speak of their reason, knowledge, fidelity, gratitude, and the like (although the analogy is often as close in these instances as in the other, and men are continually driven in spite of their prejudices to speak in this manner) because it would look like admitting them to a participation of the same *nature* with ourselves, if these words were understood when applied to them in any other than a figurative sense.

Now if we were to practise a degree of humility in looking above us, answering to that jealous pride we feel in regard to things below us, we ought to guard the

expressions which are applied in common both to the divine and the human nature with still greater care—and never push the application of them farther than the *relation* which they are intended to signify clearly warrants; because it is undeniable, at least in the case of *intellectual* attributes, that the nature of many a living creature approaches nearer to ours, than ours does to that of the eternal and invisible God.

The names indeed of all particular virtues *essentially* denote relation, such as justice, kindness, generosity, prudence, and cannot with any degree of propriety be predicated *literally* of a being who does not literally bear the same relation to us, which we bear to one another. They are understood to denote only that we are to expect from God that treatment which we should experience from a just, kind, generous and prudent person—and that too in a degree much more eminent and perfect, than ever can be experienced from men. And further, when he is represented as our King, our Master, our Father, the meaning is, that all that is right and estimable in those relations *will* on his part certainly be done by him, and *ought* on our part to be done and felt by us. Does such a representation lie open to the charge of denying any thing that is suitable to the divine nature? or can it tend in the slightest degree to suppress the feelings of piety, gratitude, and affection in his creatures?

In fact, the outcry raised against this mode of explanation does not appear to arise from any fear lest

our sense of the *moral* attributes should be impaired, but because it is employed to solve the difficulty which is raised about the *fore-knowledge* of God being consistent with the *free-will* and the *probation* of his creatures, and thus to overthrow the favourite position of Calvinism. It is to this purpose alone that Archbishop King applies it—and to oppose this purpose it is that Edwards raises the clamour about the moral attributes, as if *their* nature also must be held to be different in kind from human virtues, if the *knowledge* of God be admitted to be different in kind from ours.

Yet if the *nature* of God be essentially different from that of man, does it not seem reasonable and consistent to suppose that what we call *knowledge* in God must in many respects be different also? For an answer to this question I may refer to one of the most peremptory assertors of the doctrine of absolute Predestination, that has ever appeared in this or in any former age.

‘ Properly speaking,’ says Toplady, ‘ it cannot be affirmed of God that he either did know, or that he will know; but simply, that he knows. For *in Deum non cadunt prius et posterius*: there is no past, nor future to him. All is present, and unsuccessive. The distribution of things into those that have been, those that are, and those that shall be, is indeed suited to the flux condition, and to the limited faculties of beings like ourselves, whose estimates of duration are taken from the periodical journeys of an

‘opaque grain round a lucid speck termed the Sun;
 ‘but can have no place in him, of whom it is de-
 ‘clared, that a thousand years are as one day, and
 ‘one day as a thousand years. And even this decla-
 ‘ration, magnificent as it is, falls infinitely short of the
 ‘mark. When therefore I speak of *fore-knowledge*
 ‘as an attribute essential to Deity, I speak, as St. Paul
 ‘says, after the manner of men. The simple term
 ‘*knowledge* would be more intrinsically proper; but
 ‘then it *would not so readily aid the conceptions* of
 ‘ordinary persons. Though, for my own part, I
 ‘would always rather call the divine knowledge *omni-*
 ‘*science*, than give it any other name*.’

That a writer who thus clearly admits the nature of God, in a point so essential, to be widely different from that of man, should yet think himself entitled to reason upon that nature, and draw inferences from his *knowledge*, his *will*, his *happiness*, with the same boldness and confidence that he does when applying these terms to a creature, is to me unaccountable. But so it is. This very writer proceeds in the same treatise to declare, that ‘the Deity must have within himself a
 ‘constant and irremediable source of standing uneasi-
 ‘ness, if any thing can happen in contrariety to his
 ‘will—that this frustration must be a calamity on
 ‘God himself, and inflict essential and never-ending
 ‘pain, on the divine mind.’

* Christian and Philosoph. Necessity Asserted, c. v.

Precisely in this spirit of disputatious boldness was the question asked, ‘Why doth he yet punish? for who hath resisted his will?’ A question which St. Paul puts down with the dignified and just reproof, ‘Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?’

From vainly supposing that when we have affixed a *name* we have acquired a notion as determinate to our understanding, as the form or the sound of the letters is to our senses, men are betrayed into this rash and dogmatical mode of reasoning. The danger of indulging it is much greater than those who introduced it at first suspected. Edwards, who argues against Archbishop King’s explanation with so much apparent zeal for religion, talks of ‘that clear and distinct method of reasoning introduced by the new philosophy;’ by which he probably means the Cartesian; for although Locke teaches the same doctrine of determinate ideas, whose agreement or disagreement we perceive, and without which, according to him, there is no knowledge, (a gratuitous assumption which leads to a world of errors,) yet as Edwards was one of Locke’s earliest antagonists, it is not likely that he would seriously dignify his system with such a title.

Of the evil of applying this method of argumentation to matters of religion, his own tract furnishes a sufficient example. ‘Do we not, he says, from the

‘*justice* of God conclude that he will deal with every
 ‘man according to his merit? Do we not from the
 ‘same attribute conclude the *necessity* of an incarnate
 ‘God suffering for the sins of the world? Do we not
 ‘conclude from his *goodness* his design to save man-
 ‘kind^b?’

If this be the use we are to make of our *determinate ideas* of God’s attributes, we shall be no great sufferers by the loss he so loudly deprecates. For these very things are what may be reckoned among the bad consequences of that new philosophy. And when this author asks, ‘How can men know they shall be rewarded or punished in a future state but from the ‘consideration of God’s justice?’ I answer confidently, we know it from the Scriptures, and we could know it in no other way.

Another exception sometimes urged against this analogical interpretation is, that it nullifies those exhortations of Scripture, by which we are bid to *imitate* our Father which is in heaven—to be holy as he is holy—merciful as he is merciful—perfect as he is perfect. But the notions we have of this holiness, mercy, and perfection in God, are derived from what passes in our own minds; and the meaning of these exhortations is, not to be satisfied with our own limited attainments—not to relax our endeavours—or to value

^b P. 14.

ⁱ P. 15.

ourselves upon our own merit. Conscious as we must be how imperfect our nature is, we are thus taught never to suppose that we have reached, or that we can reach the bounds of our duty. The same conscience which tells us what is right or wrong, tells us also that we are far short of real excellence. And by fixing that heavenly pattern before our eyes we are daily made sensible how vile and worthless even our best deeds are, in comparison of that Being whose will we seek to execute, and who has in condescension to our capacities applied to his own transcendent nature the imperfect language we apply to ours. This he has done, not for the purpose of enabling us to speculate and argue and philosophize upon that nature, but to regulate and direct our own minds, to control what is evil in us, and to cultivate what is good.

But it has been already said, that the alarm raised respecting the *moral* attributes is a point incidental to the main question. It is to the *fore-knowledge* of God, and to his *decrees*, that King's reasoning is directed, with a view to silence that dogmatical theology which imposes upon Christians the duty of receiving these words in their literal sense, and of deducing consequences from them precisely as we do when they are used among men. If we interpret these on the same principle as we interpret a hundred other Scripture phrases, the mystery indeed remains unexplained, but the difficulty and the perplexity is re-

moved from men's minds—and what is not the least advantage gained, much unprofitable wrangling that is destructive to all true religion ceases at once.

Let us keep to Scripture: and Scripture so understood will never lead us beyond our depth. It is only by going out of Scripture, by building theories of our own upon subjects of which we must have an imperfect knowledge, that such apparent contradictions are produced. If we set up these notions of our own as the standard of faith, and require a peremptory assent to all the inferences which appear to flow from them, we quit the true, the revealed God, and betake ourselves to the idols of our own brain. To Archbishop King we owe that analysis of the error which not only satisfies the understanding that it is an error, but enables us to point out to others where it lies. But in Luther, in Cranmer, in Ridley, in all the great restorers of religious truth in our own country we recognize the same sentiment, that to attempt to know God otherwise than as revealed in Scripture, is a vain, a fruitless, a dangerous undertaking. The words of that blessed martyr^k before quoted, cannot be too firmly engraven in the bosom of every Christian. *In these matters I am so fearful, that I dare not speak further, yea almost none otherwise, than the text doth, as it were, lead me by the hand.*

^k Ridley. See Martyr's Letters, p. 65.

P. 89. *Not in their power to avoid.*] In the furtherance of God's providential dispensations it must often happen that individuals are selected as special instruments—their desires and passions being made subservient to some beneficial end. In the language of Scripture they are said to be *appointed, ordained, raised up*, for these very purposes: which expressions have been caught at as proofs that *all* men are but tools for effecting God's designs: but if we believe that the Almighty interposes in the government of this world, directing some events more especially than others, it is but applying this ordinary solution of *natural* phenomena, to the *moral* conduct of men, and we reconcile such peculiar cases with the general belief of man's free choice and consequent responsibility. Indeed the powerful effect of such examples as that of St. Paul's conversion would be lost upon men's minds, if they were not regarded as instances of God's more especial interposition in human affairs. To infer from hence that *all* the actions of men are equally influenced and guided by him, is to weaken the impression made by these very cases. And to conclude from such passages of Scripture, that the *eternal condition* of each individual must also be predetermined and appointed, is still more illogical and inconsistent.

Upon this subject, see some excellent remarks in Sumner's Apostolical Preaching¹, a work which has

¹ Chap. ii.

thrown much new light upon all the points connected with the question of Predestination.

P. 100. *The plain and unsophisticated notion which all mankind have of the act of prayer.*] ‘Can prayer ‘offered under such a conviction,’ Mr. Sumner asks, ‘be winged with those feelings which the apostles ‘recommend and inspire? Every prayer of a believer ‘in decrees, if it is not a mere expression of thank- ‘fulness, must be either an hypocritical form, as it is ‘with those Mahometans who are practical Predesti- ‘narians, or it must be a virtual contradiction of his ‘own belief: and, in truth, *it is only because that con- ‘tradiction is deeply implanted in the principles of our ‘rational nature, that the belief itself is not more exten- ‘sively mischievous*’^m.’

^m Apostolical Preaching, p. 59.



DISCOURSE IV.

LUKE xiii. 23, 24.

THEN SAID ONE UNTO HIM, LORD, ARE THERE FEW THAT BE SAVED? AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, STRIVE TO ENTER IN AT THE STRAIT GATE: FOR MANY, I SAY UNTO YOU, WILL SEEK TO ENTER IN, AND SHALL NOT BE ABLE.

THIS memorable passage opens a wide field for reflection and enquiry. The question proposed to our Lord is one which might naturally arise in a simple and pious mind, upon the disclosure of a new scheme of redemption. It has in fact formed the subject of more discussion and controversy than any which have distracted the Christian Church, especially during its latter ages; and it is still regarded by many zealous disciples of Christ, as a proper theme for frequent meditation, as calculated to

quicken their obedience and to confirm their faith.

And yet one of the first remarks which the reading of the passage naturally suggests is, the little encouragement our Saviour gives to the curiosity which provoked the question. He does not absolutely blame the person who asked it, and altogether refuse an answer; but his answer is such as tends strongly to repress this kind of speculation, and to divert the thoughts of him who is inclined to indulge it into a more profitable channel. Upon other occasions the same caution with respect to a disclosure of future events is observable. Thus, in that remarkable manifestation of himself by the sea of Galilee, after he had risen from the dead, when Peter asked concerning his fellow disciple, ‘Lord, and what shall this man do?’ our Lord’s reply gives an immediate check to the vain enquiry, by recalling his thoughts from such idle wanderings to his own more immediate concern—‘If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee; follow thou me.’ And still more im-

pressively, the last words which he uttered upon earth before his ascension carry with them precisely the same reproof and the same exhortation, namely, to be mindful of their own duty, and to leave the rest to God.

‘ They asked him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power—but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth*.’

In strict harmony with this general tenor of his discourses, I would interpret the passage before us. ‘ Trouble not yourself about these matters which it is neither your business nor your interest to know. Enough employment you will have in working out

* Acts i. 6—8.

‘ your own salvation. Exert your best endeavours in the pursuit of that object, for it is no light or easy matter. It will give you ample scope for the exercise of all your faculties and all your time. The difficulties are greater than you seem to be aware of—and the mode of pursuing it is very generally mistaken among men.’

Under this view of the text then, it will follow next in order to enquire what are the difficulties which beset the Christian’s way, and, according to our Saviour’s expressive image, render the gate so narrow through which he must pass, if he pass at all, to eternal life—what are the false means and mistaken hopes which carry so many onward in the road to destruction.

To speak of the temptations which vice throws in our way, the profligate indulgence of depraved appetite, the lust of gain, the thirst of revenge, and other wicked passions, seems quite irrelevant to the present enquiry. Most true it is that the covetous man, the

false swearer, the blasphemer, the slanderer, the drunkard, the adulterer, the murderer, and the robber will not inherit the kingdom of God. But who is there that ever expected to enter it by these means? Ask the thousands of those careless livers who swarm in the world whether they ever built their hopes of salvation upon such a basis—they will instantly reject the idea as absurd and impossible. These then cannot be the description of persons whom our Lord meant when he said, that many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. There must be something more than this intended—some error more seducing and much more widely spread among men to account for the awful warning, that multitudes will be disappointed of admission to the kingdom of heaven, because they have sought to enter in by the wrong way.

Putting aside then those who continue in sin, without repentance and without fear, and almost without any sense whatever of religion, as a class that never can be included under our Lord's description, put-

ting aside also those melancholy fanatics who profess to build on faith in Christ, but who dishonour his name by openly discarding all moral obligation, as a class far too small to answer this description, (for the Antinomian heresy is surely not only the worst but the rarest sort of Christian corruption,) let us enquire candidly and calmly in what that difficulty consists which renders the way of life so narrow, and the numbers who find it comparatively so small.

Is it that the road of virtue, as some moralists have taught us, is steep and rugged and thorny? yet wise men, by the help of their natural reason have discovered that it is difficult and uninviting only in the outset, and that with a little resolution and perseverance it soon becomes the pleasantest and the easiest course. They have demonstrated beautifully, and to my judgment truly and satisfactorily demonstrated, that the surest way to happiness is to practise the best principles, and to cultivate the best affections of our nature—and with an eloquence that truth only can inspire they have set

forth the loveliness and the never-failing delights of virtue.

Nay, to this praise of the best heathen philosophers I would add a censure of many pious and well meaning Christian moralists, who have unwisely, and I believe falsely, described the life of a Christian as one of certain misery and severe trial—who have taught him to expect persecution and hatred from all around him—that man will be his enemy—that he is more likely to suffer by doing right than by doing wrong—a doctrine which not only contradicts the best theory that can be formed of divine Providence in the constitution of things, but is at variance also with the express language of Scripture. ‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the earth^b.’ ‘Godliness,’ St. Paul observes, ‘hath the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come^c.’ Which sentiment is inculcated by St. Peter with a kind of appeal to our experience in confirmation of its truth, ‘Who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good^d?’

^b Matt. v. 5.

^c 1 Tim. iv. 8.

^d 1 Pet. iii. 13.

But supposing this error to be banished from the mind, another mistaken way by which men in all ages, and not in the least degree those of the Christian Church, have thought to obtain the kingdom of heaven, has been the scrupulous observance of religious acts and ceremonies of the most irksome kind—abstinence even from innocent and lawful pleasures—devout abstraction from the world—the rigours of fasting, and other bodily mortifications and austerities. But that these are not the obstructions which narrow the passage to eternal life, is evident from the whole tenor of the New Testament. They are not the duties which our Lord or his apostles inculcate, when they come to speak more particularly of the qualifications necessary to become his disciples. If the general duty be occasionally enjoined of keeping the body and its appetites in subjection, yet we no where find those severe and painful privations recommended, which devotees have been fond of imposing upon themselves, and which in the eyes of the world have too often passed for proofs of a pious and holy frame of mind.

Nay, as the clearest evidence on this point we may refer to the practices which prevail at this day among the false religions of the East—practices which far exceed in bodily pain and self-denial all that has been reported of the most ascetic devotees in the Christian Church. If this be the strait gate which leadeth unto life, the religion of Christ falls short of those degrading superstitions in preparing us for it : nor have the most renowned saints of the Popish calendar yet arrived at that abstraction from all sensible objects, that mortification of appetite, and that continual endurance of torture for the sake of heaven, which are of frequent occurrence among the religious sects of India.

[It is not then by the opposition the world offers to an innocent and holy life, it is not by the severe self-denial and oppressive services which the Gospel exacts from us, that the path of life is rendered so narrow, and that man is so reluctant to enter upon it. It is not, I say, so much in the difficulties which lie around him, as in those which spring up within him. It is the pride of his heart

which presents the chief obstacle. He cannot bear to be told that his nature is a corrupt, a fallen, a sinful nature: that the carnal or in other words the natural mind is at enmity with God: that if he seeks to be reconciled with God, he must seek it alone through the merits of a Redeemer. To him, not to his own doings, however diligently he may labour in the regulation of his own mind, or in the service of his fellow-creatures, to his Saviour he must refer the whole merit and the whole efficacy of his salvation. That Saviour hath said, 'that he 'came to seek and save them that were lost.' And every man who would be his disciple, let him be the wisest and the most virtuous of men, must believe that he himself was one of those lost creatures whom Christ came to save. He must not only acknowledge with his lips, but in his heart he must feel, that in the sight of God his best deeds are nothing worth—that however they may tend, as they certainly will tend, to make him happier upon earth, they have no power whatever to raise him to heaven.

Nay more than this, if he trust to himself, if he indulge himself in setting a value before God upon any thing that he does, these very deeds will be the instrumental cause of his ruin: they will lead him *from* that gate through which alone he can enter, and will carry him farther and farther in a wrong direction. His good works will never bring him to Christ, but if he lay hold on Christ in sincerity of faith, He will easily and quickly bring him to good works. He is the way, the truth, and the life. He is emphatically called the door of the kingdom of heaven. No man cometh to the Father but by him. If then there be in any man's breast a secret longing after self-righteousness—if there be a disposition, however faint, to justify himself by his own performance—any lurking conceit that he, being so much better than others, stands less in need of that atoning merit than the worst of his fellow-creatures, let not such an one think that he will receive any thing from the Lord. He may perhaps upon examination find that he has exercised himself in doing what he thinks his duty—that he has abstained from excess—that he

has dealt justly, and worked diligently for the good of mankind—that he has even practised many of those virtues which are most truly Christian—that he has been kind, patient, humble, charitable, meek, forgiving—yet if his heart be a stranger to God, giving its affections not to things above but to things on the earth, if he suffer it to plead any one of these services as entitled to reward from God, or as fit even to bear his inspection, he is still in his sins—he will be left to wander on according to his own wayward fancies, and will never find the gate of salvation.

Such was of old the pharisaical pride which provoked the severe rebuke of our Saviour; ‘Verily I say unto you, Even the ‘publicans and the harlots enter into the ‘kingdom of God before you.’ The case of gross sinners is less desperate than yours. It is possible *they* may be brought to a sense of their wretchedness, and may throw themselves upon the only refuge that is open to them—but you who not only neglect this help, but who wilfully betake yourselves to another, are altogether without hope. Ye

shall die in your sins. Be your deeds what they may in the sight of men—be they just, upright, benevolent, liberal, humane, while they spring from a corrupt and unregenerate source they cannot please God. For without faith it is impossible to please him—and without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

⌈ If now we reflect on the prevalence of this proud spirit among men, on their proneness to value themselves upon their own worth, on the unwelcome and humiliating confession required by the Gospel from the best and wisest of mankind as well as from the wickedest and the most ignorant, we shall not wonder at the strong comparison by which our Lord illustrates the straitness of that road through which we must pass to salvation. For not only our sinful appetites, but what is much harder, every ‘high thought and vain imagination that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ’.

Neither have we yet described the full extent of that humility to which the heart of man must bow before he can be a disciple of Christ. And the part which remains to be told will perhaps to many minds appear much harder than what has been already stated.

For in thus turning from the lying vanities of self-righteousness to the true and living God, he must not flatter himself that the change is his own work. He must not take credit to himself for the victory, but must give God the praise for having called him out of darkness into his marvellous light. ‘No man cometh to me,’ said our Lord, ‘except my Father draw him.’ To God then be our thanks and praise rendered, as the giver not only of our natural but of our spiritual life. He is, as our Church often confesses, the Author of all godliness. ‘Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth^a.’ ‘It is God that worketh in us both ‘to will and to do of his good pleasure^b.’ His grace brought us to the knowledge of the

^a James i. 18.

^b Phil. ii. 13.

truth, and unless we resist or neglect his gracious influence, in spite of all the powers of darkness his grace will preserve us in it.]

Here then we may seem to have arrived at a point where the difficulties of the Christian pilgrimage are to end. And here, if we accept the Calvinistic doctrine of indefectible grace and final perseverance, they *do* end. But how contrary is this not only to the natural light of reason which God has implanted in us, but to the whole tenor and complexion of the Christian doctrines as revealed by our Lord and as inculcated by the apostles? ‘ Watch, for ye know not at what hour the Lord cometh. Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning—and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: and if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants¹.’ Is this the language applicable to those who

¹ Luke xii. 35, &c.

when they have once been admitted into the service of their Lord can never afterwards be rejected from it? Nay, does not our blessed Lord himself in his character of Son of Man, express all that feeling of uncertainty about the faith of his followers, which is so natural to the human heart, and so descriptive of the contingency of what is to come? ‘Simon, Simon, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren.’

Or again, if we pursue the whole train of St. Paul’s reasoning, or of any one of the apostles, shall we not find the same anxiety for the future, both in the case of themselves individually, and of those whom they address, which indicates the still undetermined nature of their spiritual condition? ‘Be not high-minded, but fear.’ ‘Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall^k.’ ‘If he draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him^l.’ ‘If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die^m.’ ‘I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest

^k 1 Cor. x. 12.

^l Heb. x.

^m Rom. viii. 11.

‘that by any means, when I have preached
 ‘to others, I myself should be a cast-
 ‘away’.ⁿ’

It is in this point of view that the Calvinistic doctrine appears to be most dangerous, and most at variance with the example of apostolical teaching. They continually represent election in Christ as a reason why the true Christian *is* zealous of good works. Undoubtedly it is a reason, and a powerful one—but the apostles take pains to represent it as a reason not why he *is* so, but why he *ought to be*°. ‘Put on therefore,’ says St. Paul to the Colossians, ‘put on as the
 ‘elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of
 ‘mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind,
 ‘meekness, long-suffering’.^p’

And to the Corinthians, as an earnest exhortation to moral purity, is the same argument proposed. ‘What! know ye not that
 ‘your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost,

ⁿ 1 Cor. ix. 27.

^o See Sumner's Apostolical Preaching, p. 72.

^p Col. iii. 12.

‘ which is in you, which ye have of God, and
 ‘ ye are not your own? For ye are bought
 ‘ with a price, *therefore* glorify God in your
 ‘ body, and in your spirit, which are God’s¹.’

And so with regard not only to moral duties, but to their continuance in the faith, St. Paul never ceases to speak of their election, not as having finally settled their doom, but as an urgent motive for continuing steadfast in the faith.

To the Hebrews he says, ‘ Let us hold
 ‘ fast the profession of our faith without wa-
 ‘ vering, (for he is faithful that hath pro-
 ‘ mised,) and let us consider one another to
 ‘ provoke unto love and to good works’.²

To the Corinthians, after the most exulting anticipations of future glory, he adds,
 ‘ *Therefore*, my beloved brethren, be ye sted-
 ‘ fast, unmoveable, always abounding in the
 ‘ work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know
 ‘ that your labour is not in vain in the
 ‘ Lord’.

And to the Thessalonians, after telling them that God had from the beginning

¹ 1 Cor. v. 19. ² Heb. x. 24. ³ 1 Cor. xv. 58.

chosen them to salvation; he subjoins the earnest admonition, 'Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.'

It must then be the constant care and endeavour of the disciple of Christ, *after* he is brought into the way of salvation, to keep himself stedfast in that way. The corrupt nature of Adam still remains even in the regenerate, and as long as they dwell in this fleshly tabernacle will ever be at war with the spirit. He must strive then not only to grow in grace, but he must examine himself seriously and often whether he be in the faith. However warm, and zealous, and spiritual he may fancy himself or even feel himself to be, yet let him always bear in mind the caution, that every spirit is not of God. There is a spirit of fanaticism and delusion which in its beginnings it is often difficult to distinguish from sober and

true piety. Against this delusion he must ever be on his guard ; and, as one of the best criterions for ascertaining the point, let him narrowly sift his thoughts as well as severely scrutinize his actions. For if there be any thing in them contrary to Christian humility, or charity, or sobriety, this he may be sure is not from God, neither is it approved of God. To despise or to neglect ordinances, to be morose or unsocial or austere, to be capricious or irregular in religious exercises, to think lightly of the decencies or minor duties of life, are fruits not of the spirit but of the flesh. And if any disposition towards these errors be discoverable, he should regard it as an evidence and a warning that he is in danger of departing from the right way.

Above all, if he indulge a secret pleasure in the comparison of his own case with that of others, an error into which our Calvinistic brethren are most apt to fall, let him instantly check the uncharitable and unchristian thought, and remember that in the portrait of *false* religion which our Saviour described under the character of the self-righ-

teous Pharisee, this very satisfaction forms the leading feature, 'God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are.'

If however under this severe and constant discipline he feels that inward joy which a belief of being in communion with Christ diffuses over the mind—if moreover this belief be verified by a consciousness of love towards mankind, and a manifest improvement in virtuous and godly living—he need not fear to encourage within him so just a consolation: and he must learn to despise the calumny or the ridicule of the world if ever it should be cast upon him for this persuasion.] But is it possible that any sincere believer should so far belie his profession, as to scoff at this notion of conscious fellowship with the Holy Spirit? When the voice of our Church expressly proclaims, 'that the
'godly consideration of Predestination, and
'our election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly
'persons, and such as feel in themselves the
'working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying

‘ the works of the flesh, and their earthly
 ‘ members, and drawing up their mind to
 ‘ high and heavenly things,’ can any man
 who has declared his assent to that Article
 venture to make the very object it describes
 a theme of scorn and derision ?

Even if there be no attack made upon an
individual, if it be the *class* only of persons
 so described upon whom he chooses to dis-
 charge his wanton satire, the mischief which
 his idle words may do, thus cast abroad like
 stones at random, will assuredly rise up in
 judgment against him at the last day. But
 if by contempt and scoffing he seek to injure
 the credit or to wound the feelings of a bro-
 ther, and thus lay a stumbling-block in the
 way of him for whom Christ died, let the
 awful words of Christ himself sink deep into
 his heart, and strike dumb his folly, ‘ Whoso
 ‘ shall offend one of these little ones which
 ‘ believe in me, it were better for him that a
 ‘ millstone were hanged about his neck, and
 ‘ that he were drowned in the depths of the
 ‘ sea ’.

▪ Matt. xviii. 6.

It is possible indeed these appellations which provoke the scorn of the world may be assumed as badges of a sect or party : and if so, they are justly deserving of severe rebuke and blame. It is possible the individual against whom the ridicule is aimed may be a hypocrite, or he may be an enthusiast—let God be his judge : to his own Master let him stand or fall. But whatever the case may be, he cannot be a greater hypocrite than that man who professes to believe all that our Church believes, and yet vilifies and derides one of her most solemn and explicit declarations.

Having thus endeavoured to shew that the doctrines of our Church, if honestly and fully taught, do conduct men through that narrow way which leadeth unto life, without calling in the aid of those speculative opinions which Calvin and his followers mix up with them, the question might here be left as requiring no farther discussion. Yet I cannot dismiss it finally, without bespeaking

your attention a few moments longer, while I point out the connection between this and the former discourses upon the same subject, and briefly lay before you the plan and purpose of the whole argument.

Dissatisfied as I have often been with the attempts made to refute the Calvinistic opinions—attempts which seemed to me often to retain as much error on their own side as they exposed on the opposite, and to deprive Christianity of much of that spiritual and vital force, which is its main characteristic and essential property, I thought it would be a plainer and safer way to demonstrate the identity of these opinions with that philosophical creed denominated Necessity or Fatalism—to exhibit this creed in its exact form and dimensions—and to refute it by that process of reasoning, which is called *reductio ad absurdum*, namely, by shewing how it contradicts the first principles of man, as a being furnished with active powers and with a sense of right and wrong. Whatever grounds there may be in nature for this philosophical

creed, and whatever difficulty there may be in refuting it by direct argument, the same grounds and the same difficulty (precisely the same and no other) will be found to lie in Scripture, and are produced in behalf of Calvinism. The analogy between natural and revealed religion is in this case, as in most others, strict and conclusive—so that according to the admirable argument of Bishop Butler, from being difficulties and objections they become proofs in support of Revelation.

When for instance the Calvinist urges upon us, (who admit that God has from all eternity by his secret will unknown to us predestinated, through Christ, a portion of mankind to eternal life,) when, I say, he urges upon us that God must know each individual of this portion who will be saved, and therefore that the number is long ago fixed and determined, he does in fact say nothing more than the Fatalist who contends, that because God foreknows every thing which comes to pass in the world, therefore every thing which

comes to pass is settled long beforehand—is absolutely fixed and unalterable.

Instead of being disturbed therefore and dismayed by those passages of Scripture which the Calvinist alledges respecting the eternal counsels and the foreknowledge of God, we ought to wonder if they were not there. We should then miss one of those fundamental truths which our natural reason has taught us, and which we might confidently expect would be recognized and confirmed by Revelation. Upon these very passages which are produced to startle and confound us we build our faith. We attempt not to explain away their meaning or to deny their truth. On the contrary, we welcome them as truths which, however inexplicable in their combination, yet separately taken coincide with the clearest deductions of our natural reason. For unless we hold that human liberty is inconsistent with Providence, or the contingency of events with God's foreknowledge, we can never allow that these passages of Scripture interfere

with the doctrine, that man is free to choose and free to act—and that upon himself, upon the use he makes of this high privilege, will in a great measure depend his eternal condition.

Let us not fear then to withdraw this Stoical covering, this garb of human metaphysics, with which Austin first and Calvin afterwards overlaid the divine truths of Revelation. Let us separate this dross of earthly disputation, and restore the pure substance of the Gospel to its pristine lustre and to its native simplicity.

But while we thus throw off the foreign ingredient, let us beware also that no part of the truth itself be suffered to escape at the same time. Let us retain both the purity and the power of faith—laying none other foundation of our hopes of eternal life than that which is laid, the humiliating doctrine of man's natural corruption, and the animating doctrine of his spiritual restoration through a crucified Redeemer.

To you, more especially, who are hereafter to be sent out by the Lord of the harvest as labourers into his harvest, who in humble imitation of your heavenly Master will undertake the gracious errand “to seek and to save that which is lost,” to you does it more especially belong to cast away these fetters of human invention, and to set free your limbs for that glorious work. Go not forth to fight the Lord’s battles encumbered with this unmanageable, this needless weapon. It is no sword of etherial temper: it comes not from God’s armoury: but set forward in full assurance of faith, arrayed in that panoply divine which the Scripture supplies abundantly, and which alone is able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Take then your example of instruction, not from the jejune tenets of philosophy, but from the bright and living pattern exhibited in the great apostle of the Gentiles. Address yourselves to men’s hopes and to their fears—to their sense of duty, and to their moral affections—to their consciousness of what they ought to do and what they can

do. Bid them strive with all their might for the mastery. Teach them how much depends upon their own efforts, and their own vigilance; and that those efforts and that vigilance are now doubly called for, lest this mighty deliverance should have been wrought for them in vain.

But above all teach them, as you value your own immortal souls, and as you desire to save theirs, teach them to seek to enter in by the good and the right way—and what must never be forgotten, the *ONLY* way. Speak not peace when there is no peace. Prophecy not smooth things. Presume not, through any fond notion of benevolence, or any false notion of liberality, much less for the sake of worldly applause or favour, presume not to *widen* that gate which your Lord himself has pronounced to be strait and narrow. For narrow as it is, be assured it is spacious enough for the passage of all those whom you will ever persuade to bend their steps towards it. And should any weak or presumptuous disciple propose to you the question, ‘Are there few that be

‘saved?’ your answer is ready. It is furnished by our Lord himself, and it ought for ever to silence such vain enquiries.

The number of those that shall be saved may indeed be comparatively few—but we know assuredly, that it was a countless multitude for whom Christ died. We know that the Church in the day of the Lord will consist of a gathering from all nations and from all times. We know that the faithful seed of Abraham shall then be, according to God’s eternal promise, as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. It may be your glorious destiny, it ought to be your sanguine hope, (a hope in which the consistent Calvinist can never partake,) that you may *increase* that number—that you may provide guests for that heavenly feast, who would never have heard of it but for your preaching—never have sought after it, but for your persuasion—never have found their way to it, but for your guidance. Happy indeed shall he be who turns one sinner to righteousness—who adds one

sheep to the fold into which his Lord's flock will then be gathered: and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, from his hands will he doubtless receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.]

To Him, the great God and our only Saviour, be glory and honour and thanksgiving and praise in all churches of the saints throughout all ages. Amen.

NOTES.

P. 169. *With which Austin first and Calvin afterwards overlaid the divine truths of Revelation.*] Bishop Tomline's learned investigation seems to be decisive of this point. As preparatory however to that treatise, and as equally conducive to the same conclusion, I would recommend the very ingenious and original argument of Mr. Sumner in the work often before mentioned, especially in the chapter on Election. I allude particularly to the *two criteria* by which he says the truth of that interpretation may be tried, which refers St. Paul's expressions on the subject of Election, not to personal election, but to the election

of the Gentiles. *First*, if it was really this election which the Apostle had in view, we may expect to find it most strongly urged and most clearly stated to those churches where the Jewish converts were the most numerous, and the peculiar circumstances of the Jewish nation most familiarly known. That such is the fact he proves by a particular examination of all the Epistles. In the churches of Asia and at Rome the Jewish converts were most numerous, and the peculiar circumstances of the Jewish nation best known. It is in addressing these therefore that the point is most largely insisted on. To the Grecian churches St. Paul is nearly silent on the subject, and only alludes in the most general way to their being called to the knowledge of God. Neither is the doctrine of personal election traced in the Epistle to the Hebrews. *They* had always prided themselves too much on their *national* privileges—and he does *not* tell them that they are *individually* chosen to salvation out of the wreck of their countrymen, by God's eternal decree, as it is reasonable to believe he would have done, if it had been either true in fact, or important in doctrine.

Thus far I have abridged the author's statement: what follows however is not only equally just and original, but it is so material to the point contended for by Bishop Tomline, and so happily illustrative of his argument, that I must produce the passage entire.

‘*Secondly, if the passages usually alledged from St. Paul, to prove the doctrine of personal election, were written by him in allusion either to the election of individuals, in so peculiar a manner as the first apostles of Christianity were chosen, or to the election of the Gentiles into the church of the true God; then it will follow, that in proportion as individuals ceased to be chosen in that special manner to fulfil the divine purposes, and in proportion as the calling and conversion of the Gentiles ceased to be extraordinary, when indeed the Church was composed of them alone, the subject of Election will also cease to be insisted upon and taught by the early Christian authors. The facts exactly correspond with this expectation. Among the canonical writers, it is but vaguely alluded to after the destruction of Jerusalem: and in the writings of the fathers we find little authority for the doctrine, and not a single passage which is not reconcileable with that interpretation of St. Paul for which I have contended.*’

P. 170. *Go not forth to fight the Lord's battles, &c.]* Numberless are the passages in Luther's works which earnestly inculcate this principle. ‘*In his persevera, tanquam murus aheneus, nihil aliud inculcari tibi sinens, quam quo modo se ipse ostendit et manifestat*

^a Apostolical Preaching, chap. ii. part ii. p. 79.

‘*per verbum Christi*’^b. Tu habes Evangelium, es baptizatus, habes absolutionem, es Christianus, et ‘*tamen dubitas?*’ Deus dicit tibi “En habes filium meum, hunc audias et acceptes. Id si facis, ‘*jam certus es de fide et salute tua*’” Omit- tendæ sunt disputationes, et dicendum, *Ego sum Christianus* Dedit tibi firmissima argumenta certitudinis et veritatis suæ. Dedit Filium in carnem et mortem, instituit sacramenta, ut scias eum non velle fallacem esse, sed veracem Atque ita de *prædestinatione* tuâ certus eris, remotis omnibus curiosis et periculosis quæstionibus de Dei ‘*arcanis consiliis*’^c.

After the same manner Bishop Hooper, in the preface to his Declaration of the Ten Commandments, condemns this superfluous and unscriptural speculation, as ‘*a curiosity and no religion, a presumption and no faith, a let of virtue and a furtherance of vice.*’

To these authorities let me add the sentiments of one who has made the preacher’s office his peculiar study. ‘When all these circumstances are weighed together, I think it must be acknowledged that the preacher of absolute decrees gives too implicit confidence to human interpretation, and teaches the

^b Vol. v. p. 197.

^c Vol. vi. p. 355. Quoted by Dr. Laurence in the notes to his Bampton Lectures, p. 403.

‘ doctrine of Calvin for the doctrine of St. Paul. If
 ‘ it be so, it is no light matter. It is not a question
 ‘ of trifling importance, whether we disseminate just
 ‘ and worthy notions of the divine attributes. The
 ‘ general impression which the Scripture leaves upon
 ‘ our minds is this, that God desires his creatures to
 ‘ entertain a reverential love of his goodness, as well
 ‘ as a reverential awe of his justice, in his adminis-
 ‘ tration of the moral government of the world; and
 ‘ does not call upon us, in studying the terms of our
 ‘ acceptance with him, or in meditating upon his
 ‘ counsels, to abandon our notions of right and
 ‘ wrong, or the results of that gift of reason which
 ‘ he has permitted to survive the fall. Scripture, in
 ‘ short, throughout, aims at the heart. Christ, in
 ‘ the most unqualified terms, demands the love of
 ‘ mankind on the part of the Creator; a love which
 ‘ the doctrine of absolute decrees, in all minds of
 ‘ common mould, cannot fail to petrify^d.’

^d Apostolical Preaching, chap. ii. part i. p. 57.

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APPENDIX.

ON THE SEVENTEENTH ARTICLE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

WHATEVER the true or the scriptural doctrine may be respecting Predestination and Election, it is still incumbent on the Members of the Church of England to prove that their opinions on these points are conformable to the Articles of Faith to which they have subscribed. The enquiry *then* becomes different in kind from that hitherto pursued, and of a more limited extent. In answer to those who contend that the Calvinistic doctrine of absolute decrees is set forth in the Seventeenth Article, our business is to shew, that such was not the *belief* and consequently not the *intention* of those who framed it: and this point being once established, the difficulty is thrown upon them

to prove that *their* opinions may be reconciled with it.

In order to reduce this controverted question to as narrow limits as possible, I will first state a few preliminary matters of fact, which are undisputed on all sides; but which are of great importance towards forming a right judgment of the main subject of enquiry.

It is then, I apprehend, needless to give historical proof that Cranmer, with the assistance of Ridley, was the compiler of the Articles of our Church—that he and Melancthon entertained a high respect for each other—that they maintained a long and confidential correspondence, which began at least as early as 1535^a—that in 1548 Melancthon suggested^b to Cranmer the plan which Cranmer afterwards intended to accomplish for setting forth a joint declaration of all the Protestant Churches—and although

^a Winchester on the Seventeenth Art. p. 39.

^b That the plan originated with Melancthon and not with Cranmer, as Dr. Winchester supposes, is proved by the extracts from Melancthon's Letters, which Dr. Laurence has given in the notes to his Bampton Lectures. See note 6. to Sermon II.

this design was dropped, in consequence of political events on the Continent, yet in 1552 a body of Articles for the Church of England was composed, the same in substance, and nearly the same in language, with those we now profess.

It is matter of fact equally undisputed, that Melanchthon *uniformly* taught, as Luther did in all his later writings, that the Calvinistic doctrine of decrees was not Scriptural—that Christ died for all men—that predestination relates only to the plan of redemption through Christ—that we have no concern with any purpose or decree of the Almighty, except as far as Christ is the subject of it, by whom, whosoever with true and lively faith believeth in him, will certainly be saved.

Melanchthon, in particular allusion to Calvin's doctrine of decrees, calls him the *Zeno* of his time, and thus expresses himself upon the occasion of Bolsec's imprisonment at Geneva for a difference of opinion upon this point. 'Lelius mihi scribit tanta esse Genævæ certamina de Stoicâ necessitate, ut carceri inclusus sit quidam a Zenone dissentiens.' Epistolæ, Lond. p. 396. And again, in reference to the same subject, he says, 'Vide seculi furores, certamina Allo-

‘ brogica de *Stoica necessitate* tanta sunt, ut
 ‘ carceri inclusus sit quidam, qui a Zenone
 ‘ dissentit.’ Ibid. p. 923.

These letters were written in the year 1552, the very year in which Cranmer completed his compilation of the Articles, about which he had corresponded on the most friendly terms with Melanchthon.

Cranmer’s own opinions are distinctly delivered in the ‘Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man,’ published in 1543; from which work the following passage, which has often been quoted, will suffice for our present purpose.

‘ All men be also to be monished, and
 ‘ chiefly preachers, that in this highe mater,
 ‘ they lokinge on both sides, so attempre
 ‘ and moderate themselves, that neyther they
 ‘ so preache the grace of God, that they take
 ‘ away thereby free-will, nor on the other
 ‘ side so extolle free-will, that injury be done
 ‘ to the grace of God.’

What Calvin’s doctrines were, it is hardly necessary to state by way of argument, for they are unquestionable and well known. Bishop Tomline has collected the passages from his writings which contain all the points

for which his followers contend, and which we deny*. Those relating to *predestination* may also be seen in Dr. Winchester's Dissertation on the seventeenth Article, whose summary I will here subjoin, as a just and plain statement of the case.

' Calvin's doctrine of Predestination appears, from the foregoing quotations, to be resolved into the sole will of God, both as to the elect and the reprobate. As to the first, he asserts the decrees of God to be absolute—without any respect to faith in Christ, or a good life. As to the reprobate, they by the same absolute and irrespective decree of God are predestinated and determined to sin^b, and so to damnation. How he keeps clear of making God the author of sin, it behoves his followers to explain.' [Winchester, p. 17.]

It is farther remarkable, that Calvin, about the year 1548, offered his assistance to Cranmer in the work of Reformation in this country; but 'the Archbishop,' says Heylin, 'knew the man, and refused the offer'—a mortification which sunk deep into Calvin's

* Refutation of Calvinism, chap. vii.

^b Calv. Inst. lib. iii. c. 24. sect. 14.

* Hist. of the Reformation, p. 65.

mind, of which there are proofs so late as the year 1555^d: whereas the cordial agreement of Cranmer with Melanchthon is proved, not only by their uninterrupted correspondence, but by the very phrases used in the composition of the Articles, which coincide with those of the Augsburg Confession, drawn up by Melanchthon in 1530, and with various parts of his *Loci Theologici*, and other works.

The Confession of Wirtemberg, which was composed in 1551, is merely a repetition in substance and a revision of that of Augsburg. The agreement, in point of diction as well as doctrine, between these two Confessions and our own Articles is prominent and undisguised. Some of the most remarkable instances may be seen in the notes to Dr. Laurence's Bampton Lectures^e; the first and second Articles are taken almost *verbatim* from the Confession of Augsburg; and it is particularly deserving of notice, that the seventeenth is one of those which were *wholly added* at the same time with the first and second, as well as those on Original Sin and Free-will, viz. in the interval between the first Manuscript sketch circulated among

^d Winchester on the seventeenth Article, p. 41.

^e Notes 11, 12, and 15, to Serm. II.

the bishops in 1551, and the final compilation of the Articles in 1552.

A verbal agreement between this Article and those Confessions on the point of Predestination cannot indeed be made out, because the consideration of it is expressly excluded from them, as needless and as leading to no good end.

‘Non est hic opus’ (says the Augsburg Confession) ‘disputationibus de prædestinatione et similibus. Nam promissio est universalis et nihil detrahit operibus, imo excuscat ad fidem et vere bona opera.’ Art. 20. *De Fide*.

The Saxon Confession also, which, as well as the Wirtemberg, is founded upon that of Augsburg, and which was published in 1551, speaks yet more plainly to the same purpose.

‘Non addimus hic quæstiones de prædestinatione seu de electione; sed deducimus omnes lectores ad verbum Dei, et jubemus ut voluntatem Dei ex verbo ipsius discant, sicut Æternus Pater expressâ voce præcipit, *Hunc audite*. Non quærant alias speculationes.’ Art. *De Remissione Peccatorum, et Justificatione*.

It is pleasing and satisfactory to trace the

progress of Melanchthon's opinions upon this subject. In the first dawning of the Reformation he as well as Luther had been led into those metaphysical discussions which Calvin afterwards moulded into a system, and incorporated with his exposition of the Christian doctrine. But so early as the year 1529'

' *Ante annos triginta, non studio contentionis, sed propter gloriam Dei, et propter disciplinam, reprehendi Stoica paradoxa de necessitate, quia et contra Deum contumeliosa sunt, et nocent moribus. Epist. lib. Lond. p. 407.* This letter is dated March 20, 1559.

In his answer to the Bavarian Articles, the same year, we meet with the following passages.

Palam etiam rejicio et detestor Stoicos et Manichæos furores, qui affirmant omnia necessario fieri, bonas et malas actiones, de quibus omitto hic longiores disputationes: Tantum oro juniores ut fugiant has monstruosas opiniones quæ sunt contumeliosæ contra Deum, et perniciosæ moribus. Nam si omnia necessario fiunt, nihil opus est deliberatione et diligentia, de qua Paulus dicit: *Accuratè ambulate, non ut fatui.* Op. vol. i. p. 370.

Again,

Scio multa inextricabilia in hac quæstione disputari.... Sit ea modestia ingeniorum, ut honestas sententias, et quidem divinitus traditas, modeste retineant, etiamsi non omnes præstigias, quæ contra struuntur, destruere possint. Memini Franciscum Stadianum excellentem ingenio dicere, *SE UTRAMQUE PROPOSITIONEM CREDERE: Esse determinationem divinam, et esse contingentiam, sed se non posse omnia contraria explicare.* Ibid. This is the state of mind to which the reasoning of the foregoing discourses tends, and the *reasonableness* of which it is indeed the main purpose of my argument to establish.

he renounced this error, and expunged the passages that contained it from the later editions of his *Loci Theologici*. Luther, who had in his early life maintained the same opinions, after the controversy with Erasmus about free-will never taught them; and although he did not, with the candour of Melanchthon, openly retract what he had once written, yet he bestowed the highest commendations on the last editions of Melanchthon's work, containing this correction^c. He also scrupled not to assert publicly, that at the beginning of the Reformation his creed was not completely settled^d: and in his last work of any importance he is anxious to point out the qualifications with which all he had ever said on the doctrine of absolute necessity ought to be received. 'Vos ergo, qui nunc me audistis, memineritis me hoc docuisse, Non esse inquirendum de Prædestinatione *Dei absconditi*, sed in illis acquiescendum, quæ revelantur per vocationem et per ministerium verbi. . . . Hæc eadem alibi quoque in meis libris protestatus sum, et nunc etiam viva voce trado: *Ideo sum excusatus*^e.'

^c Pref. to the first vol. of Luther's works, A. D. 1546.

^d Laur. Bampton. Lect. note 21. to Serm. II.

^e Op. vol. vi. p. 355.

Dr. Laurence, to whom we are indebted for a learned, full, and accurate investigation of these points, and whose notes contain the most valuable proofs and authorities concerning them, observes, that after the Diet of Augsburg (in 1530) the obnoxious tenet of absolute necessity was no more heard of. (Bampt. Lect. p. 249.) So little ground is there for the pretence set up by some recent advocates of Calvinism, that the Reformers had not yet purified themselves entirely from the leaven of popery—and that when this thorough separation from the Romish corruptions took place, the doctrine in question naturally arose. The fact is directly *the reverse*. Predestination was a constant doctrine and a familiar term among divines for centuries before. But the Romanists taught a predestination founded on foreseen good works or merit, while the first Reformers, rejecting this with abhorrence, held a predestination that was equivalent to fatalism. This error however, as they advanced in the knowledge of the Scriptures, was by degrees abandoned; and a doctrine more truly Scriptural succeeded, that of predestination through Christ of all those who should build their faith on him. The proofs of this change in Melancthon's writings are innumerable: but there is one passage more remarkable

than the rest, which occurs in a letter of his to Cranmer, in 1548, because it not only shews how thoroughly he disapproved the opinions formerly maintained on these points, but there is every reason to believe it was the cause of Cranmer's inserting that caution in the seventeenth Article, against dwelling in our thoughts upon *absolute decrees of predestination* [*sententiam prædestinationis*], which soon afterwards appeared.

‘Nimis horridæ fuerunt initio Stoicæ disputationes apud nostros de fato, et disciplinæ nocuerunt. *Quare te rogo, ut de tali aliqua formula cogites.*’ Ep. xlv. lib. iii.

[It is then as clear and demonstrable a truth as any historical fact whatever, that Cranmer, both before and during his compilation of the Articles, differed from Calvin, and that he agreed with Luther and Melanchthon upon the points of Predestination and Election. Whether their opinion was right or wrong is not now the question, but whether it was opposed to that of Calvin. Neither is it essential in this argument to shew the consistency of the language employed, or to explain how it is that those consequences do not flow from it, which its adversaries alledge. These are points upon which I have enlarged in the foregoing dis-

courses: and a repetition of those discussions would not only be needless, but irrelevant in this place.

It cannot however fail to be observed, as characteristic marks of the respective schools, that Calvin is bold, precise, and peremptory, while the others are cautious and diffident in their language—‘fearful,’ according to the words of Ridley, ‘to go farther than the text doth as it were lead them by the hand.’ They seem to be aware also, that on subjects of this nature only a *partial* disclosure of the truth can be expected. If we cannot adequately comprehend the nature of God, if *time* and *succession of events* are ideas proper only to ourselves, and not applicable to him, how can we presume to speculate and argue upon his *antecedent* will and his *consequent* will, his *foreknowledge*, his purpose, and decrees? What he has thought fit to reveal, we receive with alacrity and thankfulness, but more than that we presume not, by way of inference and constructive argument, to ascertain: nor does it seem to be either wise or innocent to apply the knowledge that *is* revealed to any other use, than that of our own spiritual comfort and edification. Thus while Calvin is intent upon *definition* and *system*, they are careful to restrict themselves to the

express declarations of Scripture, intent indeed upon rejecting error, but not solicitous about answering cavils or resolving curious questions—regardless, in short, how imperfect and unsatisfactory such a scheme may be to the understanding—but fully assured that enough is communicated of the divine counsels for our eternal interests; and that to seek to penetrate beyond this cometh of evil.⁷

Let us now see how far the choice of words in the composition of the seventeenth Article supports the representation here given of the opinions held by the framers of it. And to save the trouble of reference, the whole is subjoined, both in Latin and in English, because some slight difference has been pointed out between the two not altogether indifferent to the question before us.

XVII. *De Prædestinatione, et Electione.*

Prædestinatio ad vitam, est æternum Dei propositum, quo ante jacta mundi fundamenta, suo consilio, nobis quidem occulto, constanter decrevit, eos, quos in Christo elegit ex hominum genere, a maledicto et exitio liberare, atque (ut vasa in honorem

efficta) per Christum, ad æternam salutem adducere. Unde qui tam præclaro Dei beneficio sunt donati, illi Spiritu ejus, opportuno tempore operante, secundum propositum ejus vocantur; vocationi per gratiam parent; justificantur gratis; adoptantur in filios Dei; unigeniti ejus Filii Jesu Christi imagini efficiuntur conformes; in bonis operibus sancte ambulant; et demum ex Dei misericordia pertingunt ad sempiternam felicitatem.

Quemadmodum prædestinationis et electionis nostræ in Christo pia consideratio, dulcis, suavis, et ineffabilis consolationis plena est vere piis, et his qui sentiunt in se vim Spiritus Christi, facta carnis, et membra, quæ adhuc sunt super terram, mortificantem, animumque ad cœlestia et superna rapientem, tum quia fidem *nostram* de æterna salute consequenda per Christum plurimum stabilit atque confirmat, tum quia amorem *nostrum* in Deum vehementer accendit: Ita hominibus curiosis, carnalibus, et Spiritu Christi destitutis, ob oculos perpetuo versari prædestinationis Dei sententiam perniciosissimum est præcipitium, unde illos Diabolus protrudit, vel in desperationem, vel in æque perniciosam impurissimæ vitæ securitatem. Deinde promissiones divinas sic amplecti

oportet, ut nobis in Sacris literis generaliter propositæ sunt; et Dei voluntas in nostris actionibus ea sequenda est, quam in verbo Dei habemus diserte revelatam.

In the English Article which follows, the words *added* in 1562 to the original Article of 1552 are expressed in capitals. The words *omitted* in 1562, which were in the Article of 1552, are given in the margin. The *variation* between the Latin and the English copies is marked in Italics.

XVII. *Of Predestination and Election.*

‘ Predestination to Life is the everlasting
 ‘ purpose of God, whereby (before the foun-
 ‘ dations of the world were laid) he hath con-
 ‘ stantly decreed by his counsel secret to us,
 ‘ to deliver from curse and damnation those
 ‘ whom he hath chosen IN CHRIST out of
 ‘ mankind, and to bring them by Christ to
 ‘ everlasting salvation, as vessels made to
 ‘ honour. Wherefore, they which be endued
 ‘ with so excellent a benefit of God be called
 ‘ according to God’s purpose by his Spirit
 ‘ working in due season: they through grace
 ‘ obey the calling: they be justified freely:
 ‘ they be made sons of GOD BY adoption:

‘ they be made like the image of ^h his only-
 ‘ begotten Son Jesus Christ : they walk reli-
 ‘ giously in good works, and at length by
 ‘ God’s mercy, they attain to everlasting fe-
 ‘ licity.

‘ As the godly consideration of Predestina-
 ‘ tion, and our Election in Christ, is full of
 ‘ sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to
 ‘ godly persons, and such as feel in themselves
 ‘ the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortify-
 ‘ ing the works of the flesh, and their earthly
 ‘ members, and drawing up their mind to high
 ‘ and heavenly things, as well because it doth
 ‘ greatly establish and confirm *their* faith of
 ‘ eternal salvation to be enjoyed through
 ‘ Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle
 ‘ *their* love towards God : So, for curious and
 ‘ carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ,
 ‘ to have continually before their eyes the
 ‘ sentence of God’s Predestination, is a most
 ‘ dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth
 ‘ thrust them either into desperation, or into
 ‘ wretchlessness of most unclean living, no
 ‘ less perilous than desperation.

‘ Furthermore¹, we must receive God’s pro-

^h The only begotten Jesus Christ. Ed. of 1552.

¹ After ‘ furthermore’ the following words were in the Article of 1552, which are now omitted : ‘ though the
 ‘ decrees of Predestination be unknown to us, yet’

‘mises in such wise, as they be generally set forth to us in holy Scripture: and, in our doings, that Will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God.’

Now we have already observed, that the metaphysical disputes about Necessity and Free-will had been long ago laid aside by the principal German Reformers with whom Cranmer corresponded, who had found by experience that their views ought to be confined to what is revealed in Scripture. It was not then because the subject was *new*, and because their minds had not yet been raised to the contemplation and study of these abstract enquiries, that they took this limited ground; but they had *run through* and exhausted the controversy, and found that the only resting place after these wearisome flights was in the revealed word of God.

It is material to bear this in mind; because it is sometimes imagined, that the doctrines which afterwards took the name of Calvinism, had not been fully presented to the minds of these early divines, but were the fruits of a more thorough and complete reformation in religion.

There are then two points in the wording of the seventeenth Article, to which the attention should be directed, in order to judge fairly of our main position.

The FIRST is, that in many of the *most remarkable phrases* we trace the language of those who disapproved the Calvinistic doctrines, and ‘the striking feature of whose system was,’ as Dr. Laurence observes, ‘an *election in Christ.*’ p. 389.

Quos in Christo elegit. Art. 17.] Melancthon has the following passage in his *Loci Theologici*. ‘Ad Ephes. 1. dicitur, *Elegit nos in Christo*, ut doceat nos causam electionis esse non nostram dignitatem, sed Christum; ne, remoto Christo et Evangelio de Electione cogitemus, sed causam electionis in promissione Christi quæramus.’ Cap. de Prædestinatione. Op. vol. i. p. 259.

Ex hominum genere a maledicto et exitio liberare.] Can we doubt, says Dr. Laurence, the source or tendency of the expressions ‘quos elegit ex hominum genere,’ when we recollect the frequent recurrence of language almost similar, and of an idea precisely the same, in the writings of Melancthon? ‘Quod

^m Note 3. to Serm. VIII.

‘ Pater æternus *in genere humano*
 ‘ *elegerit* sibi Ecclesiam. Loci Theolog. Art.
 ‘ de Deo. p. 22. Recte dicitur causam elec-
 ‘ tionis esse misericordiam in voluntate Dei,
 ‘ *qui non vult perire totum genus humanum*
 ‘ *sed propter filium* colligit et servat Eccle-
 ‘ siam. Nam *ideo* electi sumus, quia effi-
 ‘ cimur membra Christi. Ibid. p. 473. Reve-
 ‘ lavit arcanum decretum de remissione pec-
 ‘ catorum propter Filium, et colligit sibi *ex*
 ‘ *tam corrupta massa humani generis* Eccle-
 ‘ siam.’ Luth. Op. vol. ii. p. 505.

After reading these passages, to make the proof more convincing, let us turn to the language of Calvin’s Institute.

‘ Prædestinationem vocamus æternum Dei
 ‘ decretum, quo apud se constitutum habuit,
 ‘ *quid de unoquoque homine fieri vellet.*’ Lib.
 iii. cap. 21. sect. 5.

However undeniable it may be, that to God every thing which happens throughout all time is known in its minutest detail from all eternity, and therefore that the destiny of each individual is foreseen as well as that of whole communities, yet it was characteristic of the Lutheran Reformers, instructed as they had been by experience in the vanity of all metaphysical speculations upon these subjects, to teach a predestination not of *indivi-*

duals, but of the Church *collectively*, into which Church individuals are *called*, and according to their faith and obedience *elected* to eternal life. Although they might acknowledge that God was the sole author and arbiter of this dispensation, as he is of all that happens in the material world, yet they did not allow, that every single act was decreed and rendered necessary by him in the one case more than in the other : and in the language they employ on this unfathomable question, they are careful not to leave that impression upon the mind. In this caution the English Reformers imitated their example. ‘ De electione,’ says Melancthon, ‘ a *posteriore* judicamus^a ;’ and as Bishop Bancroft observed at the Hampton Court conference, ‘ that we ought to reason, rather ‘ *ascendendo* than *descendendo*, thus : I live in ‘ obedience to God, in love with my neighbour, &c. therefore I trust that God hath ‘ elected me^o ;’ so Cranmer expressly teaches ‘ that we ought not to assure ourselfe, that ‘ we be elected any otherwise, than by felyng ‘ of spiritual motions in our hart, and by the ‘ tokens of good and vertuous livyng^p.’ In

^a Loci Theologici, p. 258.

^o Second day’s conference.

^p Necessary Doctrine and Erudition. Chap. on Free-will.

which passage he has expressed, though somewhat more mildly, the very sentiment of Luther, ‘*Perniciosa et pestilens cogitatio est de quare, ac certum affert interitum, præsertim cum ascendimus altius, et de prædestinatione volumus philosophari.*’ Op. vol. vi. p. 204. How intimately this accords with the language of the Article it is needless to point out.

I proceed therefore to notice other expressions which lead to the same conclusion.

Quemadmodum prædestinationis et electionis nostræ in Christo pia consideratio *dulcis, suavis et ineffabilis consolationis plena est* &c.] No candid enquirer will refuse to acknowledge that when Cranmer wrote this clause, the following words of Melancthon were in his mind. ‘Quos elegit hos et vocavit. Rom. viii. *Dulcem, salutarem, et multiplicem consolationem* continet hæc sententia, quæ tamen velut inanis ab otiosis lectoribus præteritus.’ Loci Theol. fol. 258.

Again,

Ita hominibus *curiosis*, carnalibus, et spiritu Christi destitutis, ob oculos perpetuo versari prædestinationis Dei sententiam, per-

niciosissimum est *præcipitium*, unde illos diabolus protrudit, vel in desperationem, vel in æqui perniciosam *impurissimæ vitæ securitatem*¹.] This sentiment abounds in Luther's writings. In the following passages, some of the most remarkable phrases employed by the framer of the Article will be found.

Curiosis in posteriore sententia 'Multi sunt vocati, pauci electi,' magna materia absurditatis et impiarum cogitationum est. Quos Deus eligit necessario salvantur; e contra vero, quos non eligit, quicquid etiam fecerint, qualecunque pietatis studium præsent, tamen exitium declinare non poterunt, neque salutem consequentur. Proinde ergo me necessitati non opponam Verum, si nunc hæ cogitationes cum superioribus de præ-

¹ *Securilatem. Recklessness.* The use of the word *wretchless* Dr. Johnson calls an unaccountable corruption in our language. It probably arose from observing the original word to be spelt *recheless*; and after it became obsolete in conversation, so as to be learnt by the eye rather than the ear, the *ch* in the first syllable came to be pronounced not as our Saxon ancestors did, *reck*, but as it is in *rich*: this led to the further corruption *wretch*, nothing being more common in practice than to confound and at length to identify a foreign or an obsolete word with some word of the language that is well known and in frequent use. The orthography of the old copies of our Articles ought surely to be restored.

destinatione conferantur, id certo deprehendatur, *priores ex diabolo esse*, quæ hominibus cum *exitiali* scandalo sunt, ut *vel nunc desperent, vel omnem pietatis sensum rejiciant*. Postilla Domestica. p. 57.

Luther proceeds in the same tract to reason against the doctrine of election from eternity in the mind of God, to assert that it is the will of God that all men should be saved, and that none should perish, and to describe the Elect as those who ‘diligenter ‘*Evangelium audiunt, in Christum credunt, fidem in bonis fructibus declarant.*’ Of these he says, ‘Hi demum veri Christiani evadunt. ‘*Ubi e contra ii, qui sentiunt Dei voluntatem non esse, ut omnes salventur, aut in desperationem ruunt, aut in securissimam impietatem dissolvuntur.*’

In the remarkable use of the word *præcipitium* we also recognize the style of Luther, who employs it precisely in the same sense. Speaking of the Monks, he says, His enim avertunt corda hominum a fide et communi salutis via ad sua *præcipitia*. Op. vol. i. p. 376.

In the concluding cautions with regard to the *promises* and the *will* of God, the same character is observable which marks the

writings both of Luther and Melanchthon, an anxiety to exclude the doctrine of personal election and reprobation, as well as that of irrelative decrees from all eternity.

Deinde *promissiones* divinas sic amplecti oportet, ut nobis in sacris literis *generaliter* propositæ sunt.] Among the many passages of Luther's works in which this point is inculcated, the following may suffice for our purpose. 'Non est restringenda *generalis promissio*, qua gratiam bonis, malis, parvis, magnis, frigidis, calidis, aridis et viridibus offert; non est *arctanda* ad illos, qui, talibus stolis induti, pii et sancti esse volunt.' Seckendorf, vol. i. lib. 2. sect. 43. §. 5.

'Quod autem Christum non omnes accipiunt *ipsorum culpa fit*, quod non credunt, et indulgent diffidentiae suæ. Interim manet *sententia Dei et promissio universalis*, quod Deus omnes homines vult salvos esse.' Op. iv. p. 441.

In Melanchthon's works the same idea perpetually occurs. 'Est igitur in voluntate Dei causa electionis misericordia et meritum Christi, sed concurrere oportet apprehensionem nostram. Cum enim *promissio gratiæ sit universalis*, ut manifestum est, et necesse sit nos obedire promissioni, aliquod discri-

‘men inter electos et rejectos *a voluntate*
 ‘*nostra* sumendum est, videlicet, repugnan-
 ‘tes promissioni rejici; e contra vero am-
 ‘plectentes promissionem recipi.’ Op. vol.
 iii. p. 683. Indeed the whole chapter on
 Predestination in his Loci Theologici might
 be transcribed as evidence of these opinions.

‘Duo autem sunt consideranda in pro-
 ‘missione Evangelii, videlicet, quod et *gratis*
 ‘*promittit justitiam, et quod promissio est*
 ‘*universalis* Ideo neque dignitatem
 ‘nostram respicere debemus, *neque ex uni-*
 ‘*versali promissione particularem efficere.*
 ‘Sed singuli nos in illam universalem inclu-
 ‘damus. Cum igitur de electione angimur
 ‘aut disputamus, *non ordimur a nostris sup-*
 ‘*putationibus*, vel a lege, sed a promissione
 ‘Evangelii.’ Loc. Theol. de Prædest. ed.
 1535.

‘Ut prædicatio pœnitentiæ universalis est,
 ‘et omnes arguit, ut Rom. iii. clare dicitur;
 ‘ita et *promissio gratiæ est universalis*, ut
 ‘multa dicta testantur. Removea-
 ‘mus igitur a Paulo Stoicas disputationes,
 ‘quæ fidem et invocationem evertunt.
 ‘Adversus has imaginationes discamus vo-
 ‘luntatem Dei ex Evangelio, agnoscamus
 ‘promissionem esse *universalem*, ut fides et
 ‘invocatio accendi possit.’ Ibid. fol. 259.

Dei voluntas ea sequenda est, quam in verbo Dei habemus, *diserte revelatam*.] Against the folly of speculating on the Divine will, except as far as it is revealed in Scripture, Dr. Laurence has collected, in his valuable notes to the Bampton Lectures, a multitude of passages from Luther's and Melanchthon's works. The following may serve to illustrate our main position, that the language of our Article is manifestly influenced by their writings.

‘Quare non deflectamus oculos atque animos a promissione *universali*, sed in hanc nos includamus, et sciamus *vere in ea voluntatem Dei expressam esse*.’ Loc. Theol. de Prædest.

‘Prodest piis tenere, quod promissio sit *universalis*, nec debemus *de voluntate Dei aliter judicare, quam juxta verbum revelatum*.’ Melanch. Op. vol. iv. p. 499.

‘Est autem utraque concio *universalis*, prædicatio pœnitentiæ et promissio. Utrique igitur omnes assentiamur, agamus pœnitentiam, credamus omnes in Filium, nec disputemus *de alia arcana voluntate*, nec fingamus in Deo contradictorias voluntates.’ Ib. vol. ii. p. 347.

‘Cum dictum est necessario *judicandum esse de voluntate Dei ex verbo ab ipso tra-*

‘*dito*, et non ex imaginationibus humanis,
 ‘tenenda est etiam hæc regula, non esse po-
 ‘nendas contradictorias voluntates in Deo,
 ‘quia Deus verax est. Cum igitur promissio
 ‘sit universalis . . . includamus nos in pro-
 ‘missionem universalem.’ *Ib.* vol. iv. p. 162.

‘Et si alia subtiliter de electione disputari
 ‘fortasse possunt, tamen prodest piis tenere,
 ‘quod promissio sit universalis. *Nec debe-*
 ‘*mus de voluntate Dei aliter judicare, quam*
 ‘*juxta verbum revelatum.*’ *Ibid.* p. 498.

It can hardly be doubted, when such co-
 incidences of language are produced, that
 the compiler of the Article agreed in opinion
 with Melanchthon upon the main subject
 under consideration. I proceed therefore
 in the SECOND place to shew, from the phrase-
 ology of the Article itself, how studiously
 Cranmer endeavoured to confine himself to
 the very text of Scripture, and, avoiding all
 abstract speculation about absolute decrees,
 to teach only an *election in Christ*.

For this purpose it will be more convenient
 to adduce the words of the English Article.

*Before the foundations of the world were
 laid.] ‘According as he hath chosen us in*

‘ him, before the foundation of the world.’
Ephes. i. 4.

To deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour.] ‘ Christ hath re-
‘ deemed us from the curse of the law, being
‘ made a curse for us.’ Gal. iii. 13. ‘ In
‘ whom we have redemption through his
‘ blood.’ Ephes. i. 7. ‘ That he might ga-
‘ ther together in one all things in Christ,
‘ both which are in heaven, and which are
‘ on earth, even in him : in whom also we
‘ have obtained an inheritance, being predes-
‘ tinated according to the purpose of him
‘ who worketh all things after the counsel of
‘ his own will.’ Ephes. i. 10. ‘ And that he
‘ might make known the riches of his glory
‘ on the vessels of mercy, which he had be-
‘ fore prepared unto glory.’ Rom. ix. 23.

Called according to God’s purpose by his Spirit working in due season. They through grace obey the calling.] ‘ We know that all
‘ things work together for good to them that
‘ love God, to them who are *the* called ac-
‘ cording to his purpose.’ Rom. viii. 28.
‘ Who hath saved us, and called us with an
‘ holy calling, not according to our works,
‘ but according to his own purpose and grace,
‘ which was given us in Christ Jesus.’ 2 Tim.

i. 9. 'Elect according to the foreknowledge
' of God the Father, *through sanctification of*
' *the Spirit unto obedience.*' 1 Pet. i. 2.

They be justified freely.] 'Being justified
' freely by his grace through the redemption
' that is in Christ Jesus.' Rom. iii. 24.

They be made sons of God by adoption.] 'To redeem them that were under the law,
' that we might receive the adoption of sons.'
Gal. iv. 5.

*They be made like the image of his only-
begotten Son Jesus Christ.*] 'Whom he did
' foreknow, he did also predestinate to be
' conformed to the image of his Son.' Rom.
viii. 29.

They walk religiously in good works.] 'Cre-
' ated in Christ Jesus unto good works, which
' God hath before ordained that we should
' walk in them.' Eph. ii. 10.

*And at length by God's mercy they attain
everlasting felicity.*] 'Come, ye blessed of
' my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared
' for you from the foundation of the world.'
Matt. xxv. 34.

Cranmer's plan was to avoid all abstract speculation about God's decrees, and to teach only *an election in Christ*; and by so doing, he not only adheres closely to the au-

thority of Scripture, but he virtually includes the *terms* and *conditions* of the Christian covenant under the notion of election. That this principle was not lost sight of or weakened by the resettlers of our Church in Queen Elizabeth's reign, is evident from the very alteration, slight as it is, which the seventeenth Article underwent at the revision of 1562. For, as if in order to mark this point decisively, in the sentence which before ran 'whom he hath chosen out of mankind,' they introduced the words 'in Christ' after the word 'chosen,' although the context sufficiently implied that such was the meaning of the first compiler. The fact however is material, as an argument against those writers who pretend that the Reformers of 1562 were more Calvinistic than those of Edward the Sixth's reign.

The Articles were not published in English till 1571. In this translation Dr. Laurence has justly remarked on a deviation from the original which, though probably undesigned and not very important, yet, as far as it goes, weakens the anti-calvinistic character of the seventeenth Article. The words '*fidem nostram*' and '*amorem nostrum*,' are translated '*their* faith' and

‘*their* love.’ Whereas, he observes, the pronoun *noster* seems not to have been adventitiously adopted, the use of it being to impress the Lutheran idea of election, not as individuals but as *Christians*, in a character common to us all, and one to which alone confidence in eternal salvation is attached. ‘Qui de hoc (viz. de prædestinatione) dubitat,’ remarks Bucer in his explanation of Melanchthon’s doctrine, ‘nequit esse Christianus. Præsumendum igitur, ut principium fidei, *nos omnes* a Deo esse præscitos, præfinitos, separatos a reliquis, et selectos in hoc, ut æternum servemur, hocque propositum Dei mutari non posse.’ Note 4. to Serm. viii.

As some compensation however for this defect, the English translation serves as a commentary upon one passage which in the Latin is, from the idiom of the language, equivocal.

‘Quemadmodum *prædestinationis et electionis nostræ* in Christo pia consideratio,’ may be translated ‘As the godly consideration of *our predestination and election* in Christ;’ but this is *not* the authorized translation; and the difference is not immaterial. The Article runs in English, ‘As the godly consideration of *predestination and our elec-*

‘*tion in Christ* ;’ separating *our* from *predestination*, (which it thus represents as relating *generally* to the purpose of redemption by Christ,) and adding it to *election* which by the very meaning of the term is necessarily applied to *individuals*.

The force of this distinction, which the English translation has made apparent, is clearly in favour of the Lutheran construction: but I am inclined to think it has been hitherto unobserved, because Dr. Laurence^r, when quoting the English Article, inadvertently gives the clause not as it is in the authentic copy, but thus, ‘the godly consideration of *our* predestination and election in *Christ*.’ And Dr. Winchester commits the equivalent error of omitting the pronoun *our* altogether, ‘the godly consideration of predestination and election, &c.’^r

It is observable then of this Article, that it neither sanctions the doctrine of reprobation, nor that of *absolute* predestination to life. But it is farther to be observed, as Playfere has well pointed out, that it speaks of two kinds of predestination, one of which is re-

^r See notes to Laurence’s Bampton Lect. p. 430, &c. and Winchester on the Seventeenth Art. p. 19.

commended to us, the other condemned¹. Predestination, rightly and piously considered, that is, not absolute or irrespective, but with respect to faith in Christ working by love, is a sweet and comfortable doctrine: but 'to have continually before one's eyes 'the *sentence* of predestination,' is a different thing from the *godly consideration of predestination in Christ*. 'What is this sentence? Playfere asks. The bare and 'naked sentence; that very decree itself 'which is expressed in the first of the Lambeth Articles, *That God hath predestinated 'some men to life, and hath reprobated some 'men to death*, without any mention or consideration of Christ, of faith, of God's pre-science, or any other of his attributes².'

'The *sentence* therefore of predestination, 'without respect to the *manner* of it, is a 'downfall; but the *manner* of it, our being 'chosen in Christ, is the fountain of all comfort, and hope, and godliness³.'

'And whereas it saith; *furthermore we 'must receive* &c. It intendeth to give further 'remedy against the harm, which may be

¹ Waterland, Suppl. to the Case of Arian Subscription, p. 57.

² Analysis of the Seventeenth Art. p. 199.

³ Ibid. p. 200.

‘ taken by curious and carnal persons, from
 ‘ the sentence of predestination had con-
 ‘ tinually before their eyes: which harm
 ‘ ariseth from the sentence *alone*, without
 ‘ reference and without order to the general
 ‘ promises of God. For if we receive God’s
 ‘ promises in such wise, as they be generally
 ‘ set forth to us in holy Scripture, it is not
 ‘ possible we should conceive that God hath
 ‘ *decreed* any sentence of predestination be-
 ‘ fore the contemplation of the success and
 ‘ event of those his general promises. For if
 ‘ he have before decreed to give faith and
 ‘ salvation *only to some few chosen already*
 ‘ thereunto, and then come after with a
 ‘ *general promise of salvation unto all* upon
 ‘ condition of faith, this promise must needs
 ‘ be to many illusory and deceitful; and
 ‘ thence it comes that the sentence of pre-
 ‘ destination is a downfall to despair and
 ‘ carelessness*.’

When therefore the Article bids us regard predestination always in conjunction with the *general promises* of God and with his *will expressly declared in Scripture*, it does in effect condemn that peremptory doctrine

* Analysis of the Seventeenth Article, p. 201.

which Calvin and his followers inculcate. It does not presume to explain theoretically to the human understanding what is utterly beyond the limit of our faculties, but for all practical purposes it teaches us to consider the subject as St. Paul has done¹, in an intelligible order—*God's purpose being founded on his foreknowledge*, (not as Calvin boldly asserts, his foreknowledge being the consequence of his own decree²;) and man's acceptance of the promised redemption being left to his own choice.

In this explanation no farther difficulty is involved, than what belongs equally to the scheme of natural religion, viz. *the choice of good and evil being left to his creatures by a Being of infinite power and goodness*.

But with these difficulties I have in this part of the argument no farther concern: my object being here to shew, that the sense of our Articles is not *with* the Calvinists, but *against* them. If any further proof is requisite, it is furnished by themselves—by their own repeated and importunate attempts during the reign of Elizabeth and her two next successors to procure some more ex-

¹ Rom. viii. 29.

² Ideò præscivit, quia decreto suo sic ordinârat. Inst. lib. iii. cap. 23. sect. 7.

plicit declaration from authority upon these points.

‘ During this period,’ says Dr. Winchester^a, ‘ the Calvinists were so little satisfied, that ‘ our Articles came up to their doctrines, that ‘ they were frequently calling for additions ‘ to them, to make them speak agreeably to ‘ their minds.’ In Queen Elizabeth’s reign indeed the question was fairly brought to an issue. Archbishop Whitgift was induced in 1595 by a party of Cambridge divines to put forth under his own authority, supported by the opinions of a few others whom he had assembled at Lambeth for that purpose, a series of articles explanatory of the disputed points. For this offence he was sharply reprimanded and threatened with punishment by the Queen; who however at length accepted his apology, that they were not intended as a standing rule to direct the Church, but merely as answers to certain questions which had been warmly disputed at Cambridge, sent with a view to compose the differences in that University.

In order that the wide disagreement between these doctrines and the Articles of the Church of England may be seen at one view,

^a On the Seventeenth Article, p. 83.

I have subjoined in a note the Lambeth Articles, together with that summary of the decrees of the Synod of Dort which Heylin has given from Tilenus, as the most moderate and impartial account of their proceedings^b.

^b LAMBETH ARTICLES.

1. God from eternity hath predestinated certain men unto life ; certain men he hath reprobated.

2. The moving or efficient cause of predestination unto life, is not the foresight of faith, or of perseverance, or of good works, or of any thing that is in the person predestinated, but only the good-will and pleasure of God.

3. There is predetermined a certain number of the predestinate, which can neither be augmented nor diminished.

4. Those who are not predestinated to salvation shall be necessarily damned for their sins.

5. A true, living, and justifying faith, and the Spirit of God justifying, is not extinguished, falleth not away, vanisheth not away in the elect, either totally or finally.

6. A man truly faithful, that is, such a one who is endued with a justifying faith, is certain, with the full assurance of faith, of the remission of his sins, and of his everlasting salvation by Christ.

7. Saving grace is not given, is not granted, is not communicated to all men, by which they may be saved if they will.

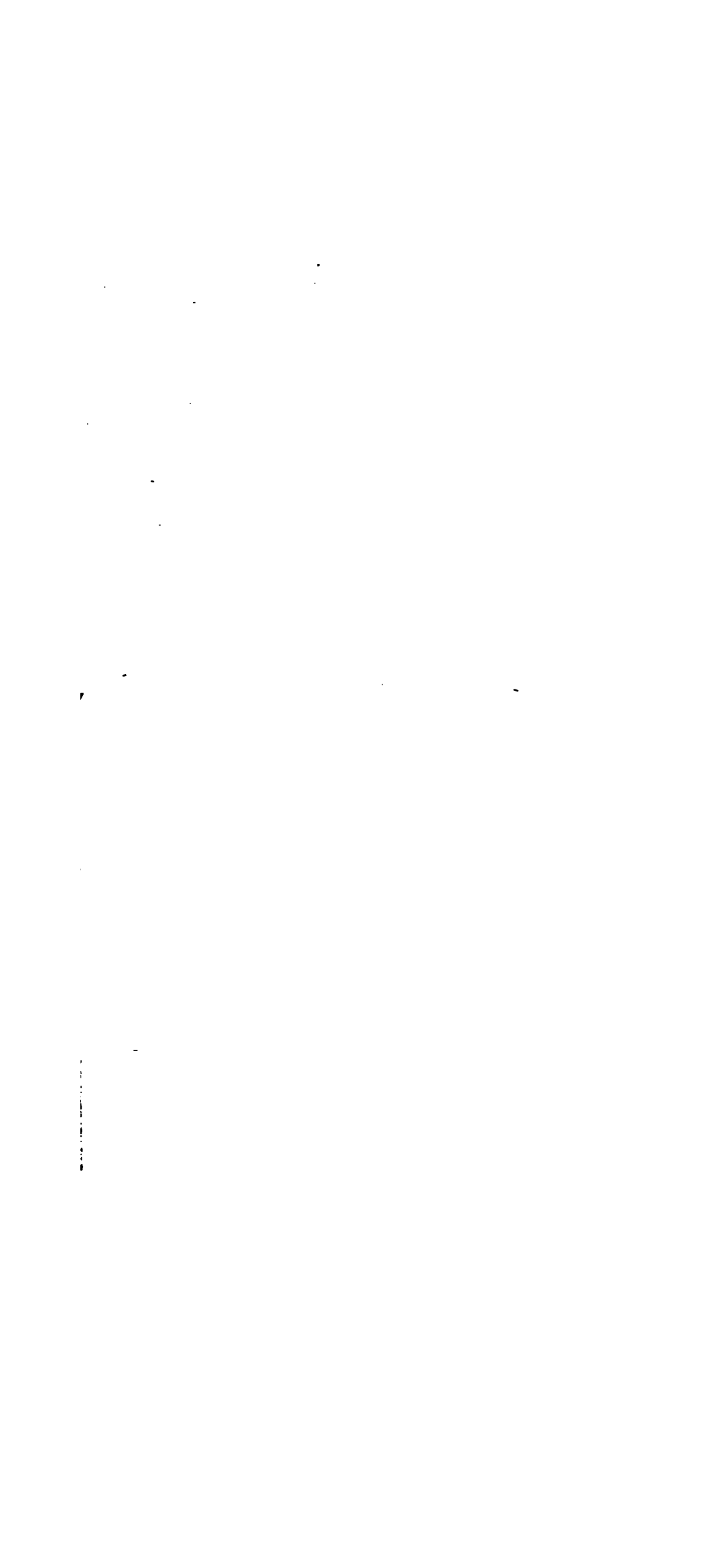
8. No man can come unto Christ, unless it be given unto him, and unless the Father shall draw him ; and all men are not drawn by the Father, that they may come to the Son.

9. It is not in the will or power of every one to be saved.



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AN
ESSAY
UPON THE
RELATION OF CAUSE AND EFFECT,
&c.



Shepherd, Lady

AN
E S S A Y
UPON THE
Relation of Cause and Effect,
CONTROVERTING
THE DOCTRINE OF MR. HUME,
CONCERNING
THE NATURE OF THAT RELATION;
WITH
OBSERVATIONS
UPON THE
OPINIONS OF DR. BROWN AND MR. LAWRENCE,
CONNECTED
WITH THE SAME SUBJECT.

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ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE

READER.

IN the work now presented to the public, I have endeavoured to set down the suggestions, which at different times have occurred to me upon the theory of the relation of Cause and Effect, adopted by Mr. Hume, Dr. Brown, and Mr. Lawrence; and to unfold the train of reasoning which has led me to regard their arguments as illogical, and their conclusions as untrue.

I am fully aware of the difficulties attending such an undertaking, arising both from the popularity of those authors, as well as from the nature of the subject.

Every one must be conscious that the particular forms of expression, in which thoughts of an abstruse and subtle nature are introduced to the imagination, and grow familiar there, are so intimately associated with them, as to appear their just and accurate representative.—But these forms of expression, though clear and satisfactory to the person in whose mind they are so associated, may yet fail in conveying the same ideas with sufficient precision to the understandings of others. In the statement of facts, in moral discussions, in declamation or poetry, this inconvenience can scarcely arise, since they rarely present to an intelligent reader any image which has not under some modification previously passed through his mind, and is not connected with his reflections or experience. But in the subtlety of metaphysics it is otherwise; and moreover, language which was originally framed to suit the commonest occasions of life, is ill fitted,

even under the application of the most accomplished intellect, to express the nice abstractions of that science.

These difficulties are the only excuse I can offer for many obscurities of expression, which I fear will be found in the following dissertation, which consists of little more than marginal observations, upon what I cannot but regard as fallacies of the above-mentioned writers, without any pretence of composition or laboured arrangement.



PREFACE.

IT is attempted, in the following pages, to controvert Mr. Hume's doctrine on the "Nature of the Relation of Cause and Effect," as set forth in several sections of his "Treatise on Human Nature;" and as confirmed in three sections of his "Essays."—The former work is taken notice of only in as far as it forms a foundation for the latter. But, in as much as some propositions are taken for granted in these latter sections, which serve as the support of all the argument, it could neither be so well answered, nor brought so clearly within the reader's comprehension, as by exposing the fallacies of those assumed premises on which it is founded, and which are to be found at large in the earlier work.

In this respect, Mr. Hume cannot fairly avail himself of the higher esteem he has called upon us to grant to his “Essays” above his juvenile “Treatise;” for, as the conclusions are the same in the Essays as in the Treatise, and as the *medium* arguments used in the Essays are the *conclusions drawn in consequence of great detail of previous discussion in the Treatise*, it is both fair and necessary to examine these details.

It may be, as is hinted in the Advertisement to the Essays,—“that *these details* contain some of those *negligent reasonings that he could have wished not to acknowledge in after life.*”

I shall not, however, readily allow of the advantage of such an excuse; for, as long as the premises that support his matured opinions are only to be found regularly deduced in this unacknowledged work, it is incumbent upon one attempting an An-

swer to expose them ; for, there is no little art, in refusing to adopt the “ negligent reasonings of youth,” in a state of advanced judgment, yet covertly making use of a material proposition (that might pass as true, even in many an acute mind, in reading these popular and elegant Essays), which is only supported by the sophistical reasonings of the youthful Treatise, and is evidently adopted in consequence of them. It is also possible, that Mr. Hume might not intend to deny his opinions, in every particular that regarded these points, as he continued to hold the consequential doctrine deduced from them ; therefore there may be the less infringement upon the wish he expresses, “ *not to be considered as publicly avowing any doctrine not contained in his latter Essays.*”

“ That Nature may be conceived to alter her course, without a contradiction,” is the material proposition (elicited in the

Treatise, and subsequently assumed in the Essays), on account of which the reader's patience is principally intended to be intruded upon; and which is mentioned in this place, in order that he may perceive the importance of its investigation, previously to his consideration of the more avowed objects brought under his notice, in the answers to the three sections of the Essays, entitled, "Sceptical Doubts concerning the operations of the Understanding;" — "Sceptical Solutions of these Doubts;" and "Of the Idea of necessary Connexion."

The doctrines contained in these last, lead directly to a scepticism of an atheistical tendency, whose dangerous nature can require no comment, nor any apology for its refutation. Nevertheless, did there seem but sound argument for their support, whatever might be the unhappiness of the opinions that could be inferred from

them, I would leave them unnoticed and uncontroverted, imagining there might possibly be an error in the argument, beyond the reach of my discovery ; and should content myself in withholding an assent to propositions which my understanding might be unable to refute. Nor at this time of day does the intention of entering into this controversy appear to be useless. It is not many years since Mr. Hume's notions were the occasion of much dispute, on the very ground on which I have undertaken it ; a dispute which nearly lost the mathematical chair in one of our universities to the present possessor of it, on account of his favouring this doctrine. His opinion, however, as far as it related to any countenance it might afford to the principles of atheism, was defended from the insinuation, by a learned treatise, from the then Professor of Moral Philosophy in the same university. This treatise, whilst it controverts Mr. Hume's opinions in some re-

spects, denies that atheistical inferences may be deduced from them: but I shall endeavour to show, that, in this respect, the author wanted observation and acuteness: neither perceiving the corollaries that go along with the doctrine, nor detecting the sly and powerful sophistry of the reasoning by which they are supported.

Also a modern and living author, of great celebrity. Mr. Lawrence, in his late Lectures, has adopted Mr. Hume's and Dr. Brown's notions of the relation of cause and effect, as containing a proof of the materiality of the soul;—a doctrine of sufficient importance to justify a further investigation of the argument on which it is supposed to be well founded.

In every controversial work, much obscurity appears in an author's arguments, on account of the opinions of his adversary

not being distinctly understood; owing either to partial quotation, or mistaken statement: I therefore mean to obviate all chance of any misunderstanding on that ground, by giving the adversary's opinions upon the controverted doctrine in his own words; taking care to leave out only extraneous matter, and to alter the arrangement in such a manner as to form at once a clear and concise, a fair and intelligible view of the whole subject.

1

1

AN
E S S A Y,
&c.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

THE plan I mean to adopt, in order to give a clear view of Mr. Hume's doctrine of the relation of Cause and Effect, in the most concise manner possible, is ; first to arrange such quotations from the "Treatise of Human Nature," as will show the opinions there held ; and afterwards select some others from the "Essays," in which they are corroborated, and enlarged upon ; and which will be sufficient to show, that the doctrines contained in the Treatise are there repeated ; with the *addition* of an application of them to the affairs of ordinary life ; as affording a ground of scepticism concerning the powers of the understanding having any part to perform in the regulation of her expectations.

The quotations from the Treatise will first show, “ what is the doctrine enquired into;” Secondly, the argument, by which Mr. Hume attempts to confute the opinion of the necessity of a Cause, for every beginning of existence; and also the argument he employs in aid of his own doctrine, concerning the ideas we have of the *necessary connexion of Cause and Effect*; and of the *belief* there is placed in such necessary connexion.—Thirdly, the definition of the relation of Cause and Effect; this definition being the object aimed at by the whole argument.

The doctrine enquired into is the necessary connexion of Cause and Effect, and is divided into these two general propositions or queries;

First, “ For what reason we pronounce
“ it necessary, that every thing whose
“ existence has a beginning should also
“ have a Cause?”

Secondly, “ Why we conclude, that
“ such particular Causes must necessarily

“ have such particular Effects ; and what is
 “ the nature of that inference we draw
 “ from the one to the other, and of the
 “ belief we repose in it*?”

Mr. Hume’s method of answering these questions is by adopting a new and sceptical view of the subject, and by attempting to confute those philosophers who were of a different opinion from himself concerning it, by asserting, that it is “ neither *intuitively* nor *demonstratively* certain that
 “ every thing which begins to exist must
 “ have a cause ; for in order to show that
 “ neither intuition, nor demonstration,
 “ proves the maxim that *whatever begins*
 “ *to exist must have a cause for existence,*
 “ let us consider that all certainty arises
 “ from a comparison of ideas, and from
 “ the discovery of such relations, as are
 “ unalterable so long as the ideas continue
 “ the same. These relations are, resemblance, proportions in quantity, degrees

* See Treatise on Human Nature, Vol. 1, Part 3. Concluding Sentences of Sect. 2d, page 116. Sect. 3d, 5th, 6th, 7th, part of Sect. 8th, page 150 to end.

“ of any quality, and contrariety; none of
 “ which are implied in this proposition,
 “ *whatever has a beginning has also a cause*
 “ *of existence*; that proposition therefore is
 “ not intuitively certain.” “ That the pro-
 “ position is incapable of demonstrative
 “ proof, we may satisfy ourselves by con-
 “ sidering that all *distinct* ideas are *separa-*
 “ *ble from each other*; and as the ideas are
 “ separable from each other, and as the
 “ ideas of Cause and Effect are evidently
 “ distinct, it will be easy for us to *conceive*
 “ any object to be *non-existent this moment*
 “ *and to be existent the next*, without con-
 “ joining to it the distinct idea of a Cause,
 “ a productive principle.” “ The separa-
 “ tion therefore of the idea of a cause,
 “ from that of a beginning of existence, is
 “ plainly possible for the imagination, and
 “ consequently the *actual* separation of
 “ these objects is so far possible, that it
 “ implies no contradiction, nor absurdity;
 “ and is, therefore, incapable of being re-
 “ futed by any reasoning, from mere ideas;
 “ without which it is impossible to demon-
 “ strate the necessity of a cause.” “ Ac-
 “ cordingly every demonstration which has

“ been produced for the necessity of a
 “ cause, is *fallacious* and *sophistical*. They
 “ all presuppose the existence that begins to
 “ be an *effect*; but this does not prove that
 “ *every sort of being must have a Cause.*”

“ As the opinion, therefore, that every
 “ existence must have a Cause, is not de-
 “ rived from knowledge, or scientific reason-
 “ ing, it must necessarily arise from obser-
 “ vation and experience; the next question
 “ therefore is, *how experience* gives rise to
 “ such a principle? This question I shall
 “ sink in the following: Why we conclude
 “ that such particular causes must neces-
 “ sarily have such particular effects? Be-
 “ cause the *same answer will serve for both*
 “ *questions.*”

The next subject, therefore, which is
 considered is “ necessary connexion;”
 where it is shown in what way *experience*
 becomes the foundation of our expectations
 of similar effects rising from similar causes.
 The reader must remember that this dis-
 cussion is supposed to contain the answer
 to the question, concerning the idea we
 have of the necessity of a Supreme Cause;

else he might be apt to forget that he has the author's authority for considering the *custom and habit of the mind, arising from an association of ideas, as the only ground of our belief* in the necessity of a cause for the beginning of any existence; and consequently for any notion of the necessity for a great Author, Contriver, and Arranger of the universe.

Mr. Hume goes on, "The next question therefore is, whether experience *produces* the idea by means of the *understanding* or *the imagination*, whether we are determined by *reason* to make the transition, or by a certain association (of ideas) and relation of perceptions."

"If reason determined us, it would be on this principle—*That instances of which we have had no experience must resemble those of which we have had experience; for that the course of nature continues uniformly the same.* Now there can be no demonstrative arguments to prove that those instances of which we have had no experience resemble those of which we have had experience."

“ *We can at least imagine a change in*
 “ *the course of nature ;* reason therefore
 “ can never show us the connexion of one
 “ object with another, though aided by
 “ experience; when, therefore, the mind
 “ passes from the *idea* or *impression* of one
 “ object to the idea or belief of another,
 “ it is not by *reason*, but by certain prin-
 “ ciples, which *associate together the ideas*
 “ *of these objects*, and unite them in the
 “ *imagination*.—The inference, therefore,
 “ solely depends on the *union of ideas* ;—
 “ for,

“ After we have observed resemblance
 “ in a sufficient number of instances, we
 “ immediately feel a determination of the
 “ mind to pass from one object to its
 “ usual attendant, and to consider it in a
 “ stronger light on account of that rela-
 “ tion. The several instances of resem-
 “ bling connection lead us into the notion
 “ of *power and necessity*.”

“ Necessary connexion, therefore, is the
 “ effect of this observation, and is nothing

“ but an internal action of the mind, or a
 “ determination to carry our thoughts from
 “ one object to another.”

“ The efficacy or energy of Cause,
 “ therefore, is neither placed in the Causes
 “ themselves, nor in the Deity, nor in the
 “ concurrence of these two principles, but
 “ belongs entirely to the soul, which con-
 “ siders the union of two or more objects
 “ in all past instances. Thus objects have
 “ no discoverable connexion together, nor
 “ is it from any other principle, but *custom*
 “ *operating on the imagination*, that we can
 “ draw any inference from the appearance
 “ of one, to the existence of the other ; and
 “ all BELIEF in this connexion consists *only*
 “ in a *lively idea associated to a present im-*
 “ *pression*; for belief is nothing but an idea
 “ that is different from a fiction in the
 “ *manner of its being conceived. A present*
 “ *impression*, transports the mind to such
 “ ideas as are related to it, and communi-
 “ cates to them a share of its *force* and
 “ *vivacity.*” The definition of the relation
 of Cause and Effect, follows this analysis of

it; and may be observed to be conformable to this notion of a *custom of the mind* being its only foundation.

Thus, 3dly, “ We shall now give a precise definition of Cause and Effect.— “ There may be two definitions given of this relation, which are only different views of the same object, and make us consider it either as a philosophical or as a natural relation: either as a comparison of two ideas, or an association between them.”

“ We may define a cause to be an object precedent and contiguous to another, and where all the objects resembling the former are placed in like relations of pre-cedency and contiguity to those objects that resemble the latter. In the latter sense, a cause is an object precedent and contiguous to another, and so united with it, that the idea of the one determines the mind to form the idea of the other, and the impression of the one to form a more lively idea of the other.”

I now refer the reader to the three Sections already mentioned, as found in the 2d Vol. of Mr. Hume's "Essays;" namely,

"Sceptical Doubts concerning the operations of the Understanding."

"Sceptical Solutions of these Doubts;" and, "Of the Idea of necessary Connexion."

From these I have arranged some Extracts that will enable us to observe that these doctrines are repeated there, with the addition of an application of them to the affairs of ordinary life, as affording a ground of scepticism concerning the powers of the understanding, in the regulation of its expectations.

That "Nature may be conceived to alter her course, without a contradiction," is the material proposition in both Essays; used as an *argument* to prove, that it is "*custom*" only which forces the "*imagination*" to *fancy* there is a "necessary connexion between Cause and Effect," with

a liveliness, and vivacity of conception, equal to a *firm belief founded on reason*. In the Essays, *the whole of these notions* are supposed to derive their support from the argument, that as we have no knowledge, either *à priori*, or *à posteriori*, concerning the "secrets of Nature;" so our observation of the action of a Cause, affords no ground for the conclusions of reason respecting it.

That the idea of causation is only derived from custom, becomes therefore the premises from which the conclusion is deduced, that "beings can begin their existences of themselves;" which proposition, though not formally repeated in the Essays (and which immediately renders void that for the necessity of a great first Cause, and "*productive principle*" of all things), must tacitly in these Essays be considered as well grounded, because, *as every foundation whatever, for supposing any cause necessary for any effect, is denied; and only an influence of "custom on the imagination" is allowed as suggesting a*

“*fancy of it**;” it necessarily follows, that nothing beyond what this influence suggests can be assigned as any reason why there should be any productive principle for all the contrivances and ends that take place in the universe; it must therefore, I think, be understood that this “juvenile reasoning” was adopted, and acknowledged but too surely, in the latter Essays.

The extracts from the “Essays” are intended to be a counter-part to those taken from the “Treatise,” which “show the argument Mr. Hume employs in favour of his own doctrine concerning the necessary connexion of Cause and Effect, and of the Belief reposed in it.”—As also the definitions of this relation, which the notions give rise to, and which, with a single exception, will be observed to be little varied from the former ones.

* ‘Had ideas no more *union in the fancy*, than objects seem to have to the understanding, we could never draw any inference from Causes to Effects, nor repose belief in any matter of fact.—See *Treatise on Human Nature*, vol. i. part 2d, p. 184.

I begin the subject with those reasonings which are reckoned the support of the main argument, "Nature may be conceived to alter her course, without a contradiction."

First.—Says Mr. Hume*, "I shall venture to affirm, as a general proposition, which admits of no exception, that the knowledge of the relation of Cause and Effect is not in any instance attained *à priori*. Experience then is the foundation of all our reasonings concerning that relation."

"And, as the first imagination of a particular Effect is *arbitrary*, where we consult not experience; *so must we also esteem the supposed tie or connexion between the Cause and Effect which binds them together*, and renders it impossible that any other Effect could result from the operation of that Cause†."

* Hume's Essays, Vol. 2, Part 1, Sect. 4th, p. 27, 36, 37, &c. Part of Sect. 5. Sect. 7.

† Ibid. p. 30.

Secondly,—“ After Experience of the
 “ operations of Cause and Effect, our con-
 “ clusions from that experience are not
 “ founded on reasoning, or any process of
 “ the understanding; for Nature has kept
 “ us at a great distance from all her secrets,
 “ and has afforded us only the knowledge
 “ of a few superficial qualities of objects,
 “ while she conceals from us those powers
 “ and principles on which the influence of
 “ these objects entirely depends.”

Thirdly.—“ But notwithstanding this
 “ ignorance of natural powers and princi-
 “ ples, we always presume, when we see
 “ like sensible qualities, that they have
 “ like secret powers, and expect that Ef-
 “ fects similar to those we have experi-
 “ enced, will flow from them.” “ This is a
 “ process of the mind or thought of which
 “ I would willingly know the foundation;”
 “ but enumerating all the branches of
 “ human knowledge, I shall endeavour to
 “ show that none of them can afford an
 “ argument, whence reason may draw a
 “ conclusion, that the future must neces-
 “ sarily resemble the past; for all reason-

"ings may be divided into two kinds;
 "namely, demonstrative reasoning; and
 "that concerning matter of fact and ex-
 "perience. That there are no demonstra-
 "tive arguments in the case seems evident,
 "since it implies *no contradiction that the*
 "*course of nature may change*; and that
 "an object seemingly like those we have
 "experienced may be attended with differ-
 "ent or contrary effects;"—for,

"May I not clearly and distinctly con-
 "ceive that a body falling from the clouds,
 "and which in *all other* respects resembles
 "snow, may have the taste of salt, or feeling
 "of fire. Is there any more intelligible pro-
 "position than to affirm, that all the trees
 "will flourish in December and January,
 "and decay in May and June?" "The
 "bread which I formerly ate nourished
 "me; but does it follow that other bread
 "must also nourish me, &c.?"

"From causes which appear similar we
 "expect similar effects—this is the sum of
 "all our experimental conclusions—but it
 "seems evident that if this conclusion

“ were formed by reason, it would be as
 “ perfect at first, and upon one instance,
 “ as after ever so long a course of experi-
 “ ence ; but the case is far otherwise.”

“ Nothing so like as eggs ; yet no one,
 “ on account of this apparent similarity,
 “ expects the same taste and relish in all
 “ of them. Now, where is that process of
 “ reasoning, which from one instance
 “ draws a conclusion so different from that
 “ which it infers from a hundred others ?
 “ When a man says, I have found in all
 “ past instances such sensible qualities
 “ conjoined with such secret powers, and
 “ when he says, similar sensible qualities
 “ will *always* be attended with similar
 “ secret powers, he is not guilty of a tau-
 “ tology, nor are these propositions in any
 “ respect the same. You say the one pro-
 “ position is an inference from the other ;
 “ but you must confess the inference is not
 “ intuitive, nor yet is it demonstrative ; of
 “ what nature is it then ?”

“ This principle is custom and habit :
 “ for wherever the repetition of any parti-

"cular act produces a propensity to renew
 "the act, we always say this propensity is
 "the effect of custom. Custom is the
 "great guide of human life; and when we
 "say, therefore, that one object is con-
 "nected with another, we mean only they
 "have acquired a *connexion in our thoughts*;
 "and *our belief* (in this necessary connex-
 "ion,) is *nothing more* than a conception
 "more intense and steady than attends the
 "fictions of the imagination; and this
 "manner of conception arises from a *cus-*
 "*tomary conjunction* with something present
 "to the memory or the senses."

The definition of the relation of Cause
 and Effect is much the same as in the
 "Treatise;" it is this:

"We may define a Cause to be an ob-
 "ject *followed* by another; and where all
 "the objects similar to the first are follow-
 "ed by objects similar to the second; or, in
 "other words, where, if the first object
 "had not been, the second never had ex-
 "isted."

And again, he has a third definition:
“ The appearance of a cause always con-
“ veys the mind by a customary transition
“ to the idea of the effect. Of this also
“ we have experience; we may therefore
“ form another definition of a cause, and
“ call it an object followed by another,
“ and whose appearance always conveys
“ the thought to that other.”

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

HAVING now made an abstract of Mr. Hume's Treatise and Essays on the subject of the relation of Cause and Effect, I shall proceed to examine each part in as regular an order as I conveniently can; and endeavour to answer the two questions first proposed, in a more popular, and, I hope, not more illogical method than Mr. Hume has followed, by attempting to prove,

FIRST, That *reason*, not *fancy* and "custom," leads us to the knowledge, That every thing which begins to exist must have a Cause.—SECONDLY, That *reason* forces the mind to perceive, that *similar causes* must necessarily produce *similar effects*.—THIRDLY, I shall thence establish a more philosophical definition of the relation of Cause and Effect.—FOURTHLY, show, in what respects Mr. Hume's definition is faulty.—FIFTHLY, proceed to prove that Nature cannot be supposed to alter her

Course without a contradiction in terms; and, finally, show, that *Custom and Habit* alone are not our guides; but chiefly reason, for the regulation of our expectations in ordinary life.

After this, I shall endeavour to point out some material faults in Dr. Brown's reasoning, tending rather to support Mr. Hume's erroneous arguments, than to repel them: arguments which Mr. Lawrence avails himself of, in the *Physiological Lectures*, at present before the public; which have drawn so much of its Notice; and upon which I shall not consider it irrelevant to make a few remarks.

SECTION THE FIRST.

First, then, let me show, why Mr. Hume's argument, in favour of the possibility of beings commencing their own existence is sophistical; as well as his attempted confutation of those philosophers who have argued to the contrary. Mr. Hume says, the proposition, "that whatever has a beginning, has also a Cause of existence,

cannot be demonstrated, because the ideas of Cause and Effect are "distinct" and "separable;" and it will be easy to conceive "any object to be non-existent this minute," and "existent the next;" without "conjoining to it the idea of a Cause, or a productive principle."—"This imagination is plausible, and may perhaps appear well founded until thoroughly sifted. On a first impression, Causes and their Effects may seem separable, because two things are mentioned; one is distinct from the other, and may be *imagined* separated from it.

They may also *seem* to follow one another, and *time* to elapse between the *operation of the Cause*, and the *appearance of the Effect*; so that during the interval of the supposed period, the effect might be *imagined in suspense*, and so indifferent to existence or non-existence; but upon a strict and rigid attention to the real nature of a thing in opposition to its accidental appearances, one cannot, for a moment, suppose that the circumstances here mentioned, namely, of antecedency of Cause

and subsequence of Effects; or of that distinctness of language which occasions two words to be used for two ideas; should in any degree render it possible for causes and their effects to exist apart in nature. That it is impossible for them to do so, without involving a direct contradiction in terms, is a proposition I hope to prove in the course of this Essay.

But before examining into this notion, concerning the possibility of effects being held in suspense, and then of being liable to begin their own existence, or, in Mr. Hume's words, "of the separation of the idea of a cause from that of a beginning of existence," it will be necessary to render the expressions in which it is conveyed more intelligible. This can in no way be done so long as the *definition of the word effect* presupposes a cause; for the supposition of the objection lies, in its being possible for *effects* to be held in suspense: but in order that this should be possible, the meaning of the word *effect* must be altered. Then, if the ideas are altered that lie under the term, according

as the varied occasion seems to require, there can be no philosophy ; and it never can be insisted on, that the *effects*, which are *supposed to be conjoined* with their causes at one period of time ; and to require, in order to their exhibition, those causes or others ; and to receive the name of *effects*, on account of requiring causes ; can again, upon another occasion, not be *effects*, not require *causes*, be held in suspense, and be *imagined capable of beginning their existence by themselves*, without conjoining to them the distinct idea of any “productive principle.”—It might as well be reckoned sound reasoning, after defining the figure 2 to be a sign, signifying that two units are necessary to its composition, to maintain, that because it stands *singly*, it can be *imagined as a unit itself*, without a contradiction ; so that it *does not* stand in need of 2 units to its composition :—that is, a word may be taken in two contradictory senses, and then it may be reasonable to predicate of each, affections that belong only to the other ; and so to form any contradictory scheme in the world. To make, therefore, any

thing like a rational meaning in this sentence of Mr. Hume's, nothing more can be intended by it, than that we should imagine, those existences which we always observe conjoined with others in such a manner, that they *appear* to be their effects, properties, or qualities, to owe them *no real existence or dependence*; and therefore capable of being independent objects, and of beginning their own existence. In like manner, it may be said of *causes*, that although the word signifies something calculated to introduce a certain quality, yet that in fact it does not introduce a new quality; thus naming the object in one sense, and imagining its essence in another sense.

This also is as though we should agree to designate each unit by the figure 1; and to assert, that the union of two units introduces a compound notion, which shall be made known by the sign 2; and on account of this relation, the union of the units shall be called the cause of the compound quality two, under a single term; and the sign 2 shall be named its *effect*;

and afterwards assert, that we can *imagine* the *cause*; that is the *union of the two units*, to exist without, and separate from, the effect, the result 2. All this cannot take place whilst we assign the same meaning to our words; and if we use the terms in different senses, there can be no philosophy.—Therefore, to make any meaning whatever of the proposition, “We may imagine causes to exist separate from their effects;” the objects we call *causes* are not to be imagined as *causes*; but may be supposed *not to cause any thing*, but to exist without *determining their own effects*, or *any others*; that is, causes and their effects are so evidently distinct, that they may be imagined to be unconnected objects, that are *not causes and effects*, and to exist separately without a contradiction, though they are named expressly as signs of the ideas we have, that they are necessary to one another.

Thus, the original question, namely, “Whether every thing which begins to exist requires a cause for its existence?” resolves itself into two others; viz.

First, Whether objects called **EFFECTS**, necessarily require causes for their existence ? or, whether they may begin to exist with, or without them indifferently ?—As also,

Secondly, Whether any objects whatever, without being considered as having the *nature of effects*, can begin their existences ?

It may be plainly seen, that the first of these questions is sunk in the latter, because, if objects *usually considered as effects* need not be considered as effects, then they are forced to begin their existences *of themselves*: for, conjoined or not to their causes, we know by our senses that they do begin to exist : we will, therefore, immediately hasten to the consideration of the second question, which may be stated in the following terms: Whether every object which begins to exist must owe its existence to a cause ?

Let the object which we suppose to begin its existence of itself be imagined, abstracted from the nature of all objects

we are acquainted with, saving in its capacity for existence; let us suppose it to be *no effect*; there shall be no preventing circumstances whatever that affect it, nor any existence in the universe: let it be so; let there be nought but a blank; and a mass of whatsoever can be supposed not to require a cause START FORTH into existence, and make the first breach on the wide nonentity around;—now, what is this starting forth, beginning, coming into existence, but an action, which is a quality of an object not yet in being, and so not possible to have its qualities determined, nevertheless exhibiting its qualities?

If, indeed, it should be shown, that there is no proposition whatever taken as a ground on which to build an argument in this question, neither one conclusion nor the other can be supported; and there need be no attempt at reasoning.—But, if my adversary allows that, no existence being supposed previously in the universe, existence, in order to be, must *begin to be*, and that the notion of *beginning an action* (the being that *begins* it not supposed yet

in existence), involves a *contradiction in terms*; then this *beginning* to exist cannot appear but as a *capacity some nature hath* to alter the presupposed nonentity, and to act for itself, whilst itself is not in being. —The original assumption may deny, as much as it pleases, all cause of existence; but, whilst in its very idea, the commencement of existence is an effect predicated of some supposed *cause*, (*because the quality of an object* which must be *in existence to possess it*,) we must conclude that *there is no object which begins to exist, but must owe its existence to some cause*.

For this reason it is, that the answers to Dr. Clarke and Mr. Locke are unsound, in as far as they are an endeavour to show, that their arguments are altogether sophistical. —Mr. Hume objects to them, that the existence supposed to begin by itself, “is not to be considered as an *effect*; and that these authors assume what is not granted, viz. that the existence in question requires a *cause*,” as where Dr. Clarke shows it is an absurdity to imagine an object its ~~own~~ *cause*, and

Mr. Locke asserts that it is equally so, to conceive of *nothing* as a cause. It is undoubtedly true, that these authors assumed that which was in question; namely, that every existence must have a cause: but, as every thing not yet in existence, *to exist at all*, must *begin*, and as the *beginning* of any thing must always be supposed, by the *nature of the action*, to be a quality of something in existence, which existence is yet DENIED by the statement of the question, these philosophers felt the involved absurdity so great, that they passed over the first question as too ridiculous, probably, to consider formally; then showed, that the mind of man was forced to look upon all things which begin to exist as *dependent QUALITIES*; and thus, that an object could neither depend upon *itself for existence*, nor yet upon *nothing*.

Let it be remembered, too, that although Mr. Hume inveighs against this method as sophistical, by conceiving it begs the question, yet his own argument, the whole way, consists in the possibility of imagining an *effect* "*non-existent*" this

minute," and "existing the next;" and does not himself consider any other "sort of being" possible; and has no other way of supporting his own notion of the beginning of existence by itself, except under the *idea of an effect in suspense*; which is still a *relative term*, and begs the question for the necessity of its correlative, i. e. its *cause*, just as much as he asserts his adversaries do, whom he declares to be illogical reasoners.

If then (as I hope I have shown) all objects whatever, which *begin to exist*, must owe their *existence to some cause*, those we usually consider as *effects* CANNOT be held in suspense; suddenly alter their nature; be "*non-existent* this minute, and existent the next;" and, though always introduced as *qualities of other objects*, be easily separated from the ideas of their causes, and require no "productive principle."

"That Cause and Effect are distinct and separable;" so "that any object may be conceived, as therefore *capable of begin-*

ning *its own existence*," must be considered as among the notions adopted in *the Essays*: what else is the meaning of such propositions as these: "There appears not "throughout all nature, any one instance "of connection, as conceivable by us;" "one event follows another," "but we never can observe *any tie between them, &c.**" Indeed, the not admitting "*any relations of ideas*," or "*any reasonings a priori*," (so as to be capable of supporting the idea of CAUSATION as a *creating principle* absolutely necessary in the universe) is but repeating "the *juvenile ideas*" of the Treatise, and "*casting them anew in these later pieces†*."

Before I proceed further, I wish my reader to grant the proposition, "That a Being cannot begin its existence of itself;" because I mean to make use of it in my further reply to Mr. Hume's doctrines; and, unless this step is allowed, I can make no further progress in this argument.

* *Essays*, Sec. 7. p. 77.

† See advertisement to the *Essays*.

SECTION THE SECOND.

We will now proceed to the second part of the original inquiry; that is, Why “we conclude that such particular Causes must necessarily have such particular Effects; and what is the nature of that inference we draw from one to the other, and of the belief we repose in it? The question, however, ought to stand thus, “why LIKE CAUSES must necessarily have LIKE EFFECTS? because what is really enquired into, is the *general notion of necessary connexion*, between *all like Cause and Effect*; and by thus putting the question respecting *particulars only*, although they might be included in an universal answer, yet no answer applicable to them MERELY, could authorize an *universal axiom*. The manner of stating the enquiry in *the Essays*, is also too vaguely expressed, (although it be evident that it is the *general relation* which is enquired into.) Mr. Hume says, “we will now enquire, how we arrive at the *knowledge of Cause and Effect**.” It ought to be stated, how we arrive at the knowledge of the *necessary connexion*, between *like Cause and Effect*?

* *Essays*, Sec. 4. p. 27.

Let it be remembered, that Mr. Hume says, "this principle is nothing but custom and habit;" that "belief in necessary connexion is nothing but an intense and steady conception, arising from the customary conjunction of the object with something present to the memory or senses; that when flame and heat, cold and snow, have always been conjoined together, there is such a customary conjunction between them, that when flame and snow are anew presented to the senses, the mind is carried by custom to expect heat and cold."

"That *reason* can never show us the connexion of one object with another, though aided by experience; for we can at least *conceive a change in the course of nature*. That necessary connexion is nothing but an internal act of the mind, determined to carry its thoughts from one object to another." Thus *necessary connexion* of cause and effect is only a custom of the mind! *Power* is only a custom of the mind! Expectations, and experience, are only customs of the mind!

The consequence of which doctrine is, that as a *custom of the mind* is entirely a different circumstance from the *operation of nature*, we may “*conceive*” at least the contrary of what we have been accustomed to may take place,—we may conceive the “*course of nature to change.*”

Now it is my intention to shew, in contradiction to these ideas of Mr. Hume, that it is *Reason*, and not *Custom*, which guides our minds in forming the notions of necessary connexion, of belief and of expectation*.

* I conceive it impossible to have a complete conviction that every Effect is inherent, or contained in its Cause, until the mind be imbued with the knowledge, that objects are but unknown circumstances in Nature, when unperceived by the senses; which when perceived, exhibit their appropriate qualities accordingly; and which then appear in certain defined masses, as to the different senses they affect, as to their figure, &c.; and receive an arbitrary name for their assemblage. They must have also among each other certain proportions. When these unknown circumstances, (or affections, or substances,) in nature, *mix*, and are thereby *altered*, the *qualities which affect the senses* are in the *same proportions* altered, and are necessarily included in those objects as their Effects. But this part of the subject, is of such moment that a separate consideration of it is intended.

In order to this let us bear in mind the reasoning already adduced in the foregoing Chapter, and it thence immediately follows, that objects which we know by our senses do begin their existences, and by our reason know they cannot begin it of themselves, must begin it by the operation of some *other beings* in existence, producing these new qualities in nature, and introducing them to our observation. The very meaning of the word Cause, is *Producer* or *Creator*; of Effect, the *Produced* or *Created*—and the idea is gained by such an observance of nature, as we think is efficient in any given case, to an *experimentum crucis*.

Long observation of the invariableness of antecedency, and subsequency, is not wanted; many trials are not wanted, to generate the notion of *producing power*.

One trial is enough, in such circumstances, as will bring the mind to the following reasoning.

Here is a new quality, which appears to my senses :

But it could not arise of itself; nor could any surrounding objects, but one (or more) affect it; therefore that one, (or more) have occasioned it, for there is nothing else to make a difference; and a difference could not “*begin of itself.*”

This is an argument, which all persons, however illiterate, feel the force of. It is the only foundation for the demonstrations of the laboratory of the chymist; which all life resembles, and so closely, in many instances, that the philosopher, and the vulgar, are equally sure of what cause is absolutely necessary to the production of certain effects; for instance, each knows that in certain given circumstances, *the closing of the Eye* will eclipse the prospect of nature; and the slight motion of reopening it, will restore all the objects to view. Therefore, the Eye (in these circumstances,) is the *Cause* or *Producer of vision*. ONE trial would be enough, under certain *known* circumstances*. Why? not from “*custom,*”

* When more trials are needed than ONE, it is in order to *detect* the circumstances, not to lay a *foundation for the general principle*, that a LIKE Cause repeated, a LIKE Effect will take place.

because there has been *one trial only*; but from *Reason*, because vision not being able to *produce itself, nor any of the surrounding objects by the supposition*; it is the *Eye* which must necessarily perform the operation; for there is nothing else to make a difference; and a different quality could not "*begin its own existence.*" It is this sort of REASONING UPON EXPERIMENT, which takes place in every man's mind, concerning every affair in life, which generates the notion of Power, and necessary Connexion; and gives birth to that maxim, "*a like Cause must produce a like Effect.*" The circumstances being supposed the same on a second occasion as on a former one, and carefully observed to be so; the Eye when opened would be expected to let in light, and all her objects. "I observe (says the mind) in this or any other case, all the preveining circumstances the same as before; for there is nothing to make a difference; and a difference cannot arise without something to occasion it; else there would be a *beginning of existence* by itself, which is impossible."

It is this compound idea, therefore, *the result of the experience of what does take place upon any given trial*, MIXED with the reasoning that nothing else could ensue, unless on the one hand, *efficient causes were allowed for the alteration*; or, on the other, that things could “*alter their existences FOR THEMSELVES* ;” which generates the notion of power or “*producing principle*,” and for which we have formed the word.

It is in vain to say that a habit of association of ideas from observing “*contiguity in time, and place*,” between objects is all we know of power; a habit of the mind will not *begin existence*, will not *introduce a quality*. The really philosophical method of viewing the subject is this: that objects in relation to us, are nothing but masses of certain qualities, affecting certain of our senses; and which, when independent of our senses, are *unknown* powers or qualities in nature. These masses change their qualities by their mixture with any other mass, and then the corresponding qualities determined to the senses must of course also change. These changed

qualities, are termed *effects*; or *consequents*; but are really no more than **NEW QUALITIES** arising from *new objects*, which have been formed by the *junctions of other objects* (previously formed) or might be considered as the *unobserved qualities of existing objects*; which *shall be observed when properly exhibited*.

If then an existence now in being, *conjoined with any other*, forms thereby a *new nature*, capable of exhibiting *new qualities*, these new qualities must enter into the definition of the objects; they become a part of their natures; and when by careful experiment, or judicious observation, no new preventing circumstances are supposed to make an alteration in the conjunction of the same bodies, the *new qualities*, that are named *effects*, are expected without a doubt to arise upon every such conjunction; because, they as much belong to this *newly combined nature*, as the original qualities did to each separate nature, before their conjunction. So little is custom the principle of cause and effect, that if upon the *first* and original trial of the element of fire,

all surrounding circumstances were put away from having any influence over it, saving the body it destroyed; that power of *discerptibility* would be ever after considered as one of its qualities; as much as its colour or its light, or its warmth, without the presence of which, it would not be fire.

This conjunction with a grosser material than itself, is the new circumstance, on which it exhibits its essential and permanent quality of *discerptibility* to the senses; now if the trial be complete, when upon a second occasion an object having the same sensible qualities as fire hath, known also to have been elicited from the same preveining circumstances, meets with the same gross body as heretofore, it must of *necessity* consume it. There is nothing to make a *difference*. A *difference* is an *Effect*, a *change of being*, an *altered existence*, an existence which *cannot* “*begin of itself*” any more than any other in Nature; could the fire be supposed not to consume the gross body, there would be a *difference* of qualities, that is, new qualities, which by

the data there is no cause for. The original circumstances, of which fire is the compound Effect, from which it results as a *formed object*, are supposed to be ordered the same as on a former occasion; these are necessarily compelled to be attended with the same effects or combined qualities; otherwise there would be the “*beginnings of existence*” by themselves, which has before been shown to be impossible. But the *combined qualities*, are the whole qualities that fire in every circumstance, is capable of producing. Meeting, therefore, with a gross body, which on any one occasion, in certain circumstances, it once consumed; under the same circumstances, it must necessarily again consume it. That DIFFERENCES OF EXISTENCE cannot begin of themselves; is therefore the second conclusion supposed to be established.

“*Antecedency and subsequence*,” are therefore immaterial to the proper definition of Cause and Effect;” on the contrary, although an object, in order to act as a Cause, must be in Being antecedently to such action; yet when it

acts as a Cause, its Effects are synchronous with that action, and are included in it: which a close inspection into the nature of cause will prove. For effects are no more than the new qualities, of newly formed objects. Each conjunction of bodies, (now separately in existence, and of certain defined qualities,) produces upon their union those new natures, whose qualities must necessarily be in, and with them, in the very moment of their formation.

Thus *the union of two distinct natures, is the cause, producer or creator of another; which must instantly, and immediately, have all its peculiar qualities; but the cause has not acted, is not completed, till the union has taken place, and the new nature is formed with all its qualities, in, and about it. Cause producing Effect, therefore, under the strict eye of philosophical scrutiny, is a new object exhibiting new qualities; or shortly, the formation of a new mass of qualities. A chain of conjunctions of bodies, of course, occupies time; and is the reason why the careless observation of philosophers, enabling them to take notice*

only of some one distinct effect, (after perhaps innumerable successive conjunctions of bodies,) occasions the mistake, by which they consider *subsequency of effect*, as a part of the *essential definition* of that term ; and *priority*, as *essential* to the nature of Cause.

As a short illustration of the doctrine unfolded, let us take the idea of nourishment, considered as the effect, subsequent to the taking of food, its cause. Here the *nature* of nourishment, is a *process* which begins to act immediately that food is in conjunction with the stomach. "That we are nourished;" is only the last result of a continuous chain of causes and effects, in formation from the first moment the food enters the stomach, to that, in which every particle is absorbed and deposited in the proper place in the body. Here, the capacity of food to exhibit certain qualities, when in conjunction with the body, is shown ; the nature of the human body, to exhibit certain other qualities, in consequence of that conjunction, is also shown ; but the *effect of nourishment*, being *subsequent* to, and at such a distance of time

from, the original Cause, is only so, on account of its being the effect of a vast number of causes, or unions of objects in succession, of which the union of the stomach and the food was first in order.

Our deficient observation, is apt to prevent our taking notice of the 2d, 3d, or indefinite number of effects; which arise in consequence of as many conjunctions of objects.

But the first, and other *effects* successively, are as much and entirely synchronous with their *causes*, as any other quality of any single object, which is always exhibited along with it.

2dly. It is also quite immaterial to the definition of this relation, whether an untried, or unobserved quality, be called *quality*, or *effect*. The unknown or at present undetermined quality, which is termed an effect, might always change its place with some *known quality*, and not bear the name of effect; and *vice versa*: Thus, a blind man may call the object which

warmed, or burned him, fire ; but his eyes being supposed suddenly to open, he would consider the flame and its brilliant colour as the *effects* of fire ; whilst he who sees fire constantly, being able always to take notice of its flame and colour, considers them as the constant and unvarying *qualities* of fire, and which render the substance before him worthy of bearing that name ; but the quality of burning, which he does not *constantly* experience, he names an *effect* or *consequence* of fire previously being in existence. But the true method of looking upon the subject is this—that fire, in order to deserve the name it bears, must comprehend all its qualities *tried* and *untried* ; *observed* and *unobserved* ; *determined* and *undetermined* ; it deserves the name only on account of its being a certain defined object ; *elicited from certain causes observed to be efficient to its production* ; and by the very conditions of the question, is allowed to be *the same*. But an object is nothing else (in relation to *us*,) than a mass of peculiar qualities ; and when observations inform us, that any known mass is produced by similar circumstances, on

various occasions; such mass or object must necessarily contain all its qualities, and be equal to exhibit all its effects in hitherto untried events. Upon any occasion where we are either certain, or have a high probability, that an object presented to us is truly similar to a former one, and was created by the same causes; we expect all tried qualities to be the same as before, and any *untried* quality, (that is, any quality not in present operation, though previously ascertained,) must belong ever after to its definition. All that is necessary is to be correct, as to the preveining or influencing circumstances which gave *birth to the object*. They being the same on any two or more occasions, the object elicited must necessarily be the same—but it is not the same, unless it hath all its *qualities*, and no other than its qualities. Therefore fire, in order to have a right to the sign of the word fire, for an expression of its attributes, in order to be a “*like cause*,” must of necessity burn as much as it must be red, otherwise the red object were not fire; and *could not have been produced by those causes that elicit that element*. I mean

therefore to conclude, that Effects are but the qualities of an object not experienced by some of the senses of the human frame, whilst certain others at present touch it; *the knowledge of which last*, being joined to the observation of the WHENCE the object was produced, beget the knowledge of what new untried qualities may be expected in future under given circumstances. It becomes therefore part of the definition of fire to burn certain bodies, to melt others; of bread to nourish the human body; of snow to be cold, and white; and these qualities they must have, in order to compose that entire *enumeration of qualities*, for which appropriate names have been formed, and to the exhibition of which similar and efficient causes have been in action.

If it should be said, that in considering objects as masses of combined qualities, the *result* of like Causes previously in action, we beg the question not yet supposed to be granted,—I answer; that *like* Causes, that is, *like* objects, are by the supposition admitted, and then the question arises, whether it is demonstrable they

must have like effects or qualities, *under like circumstances in future?* I answer, they must have like effects, or qualities, because there is nothing else *given* that can be supposed to make a difference; and a difference of qualities could not arise of *itself*, could not begin its own existence; and I add, not only, there is nothing else *supposed* that can make a difference; but that when we also know that in the FORMATION of any object no difference took place; then, *there is no ground whatever*, for imagining the *possibility* of an *alteration in the effects of that object*. But although it be very difficult in the analysis of this question, not to use the word *cause* in its intended sense, before the definition of the word is given, and although it be true that in this last observation I may have done so in saying, *that objects must be the same which are elicited from like causes, i.e. from the junction of like preveining circumstances*; (and which position will be fully borne out in the process of the argument;) yet a fastidious reader may omit every such reference to the notion of Cause; for the argument is perfect without it, and stands thus:

Effects are nothing but those *same conjunctions of qualities*, which in other words are admitted as *similar causes*, in the supposition of the question. The objects (whose *union is necessary* to a given result,) must certainly exist, *antecedent* to such an union. But it is *in their union*, there exists those *newly formed objects*, or masses of qualities called *Effects*, which are therefore *identical* with the *similar cause*; for in *this union*, Cause and Effect are *synchronous*, and they are but different words for the same *Essence*. Fire and wood must be antecedent to combustion, no doubt; but in the *union of Fire and Wood*, there exists immediately *combustion* as a new event in nature;—also in this union exists the *similar cause* allowed by the *data*, whilst combustion is also termed the *Effect* of the union of Fire and Wood; but, however termed, an *effect*, is in fact a new but similar object as heretofore. A *similar* mass of qualities, in kind, which cannot therefore be a *different* mass of qualities in kind.—Equals added to equals upon any two occasions, the whole must be equal; add equal qualities to equal qualities, the sum of the quali-

ties must be equal upon every repetition of the junction ;—and the *sum* must be the *same result* taken *twice over*, not two *different*, or possibly *altered sums*. Therefore I repeat, that in the consideration of the nature of Cause and Effect, it is immaterial whether the yet unframed qualities of objects, previous to their junction, be named *effects*; they are to be considered as qualities; and qualities may be considered as *effects*, under any circumstances that prevent their usual exhibition. Effects when developed are no more than qualities; and qualities previous to their developement are in our imagination considered as Effects.

3dly. Again, it is immaterial to the definition of the relation of Cause and Effect, that we are not acquainted with the “secret powers” of natural objects, either before or after experience; for when we find, that in any distinct and given circumstances they put on certain qualities to the senses, their secret powers and properties must be qualified in all *like circumstances* to be the same, and are obliged to be so; because no contrary qualities could “begin their existences of

themselves ;'' and by the *supposition* there is no *cause in the circumstances*, to give rise to any *differences in the qualities*. Indeed, Mr. Hume makes a great mistake in supposing it necessary to demonstrate, in every particular instance, what *particular* Effect must necessarily flow from its object, in order to gain the idea of *necessary Connexion*. The *how* and the *why* have nothing to do with the general reasoning affecting the general proposition ; for "whether like Causes shall produce like Effects" is *not* a question exactly the same as whether "such particular causes shall have such *particular* effects ? which Mr. Hume seems to consider as precisely of the same import* ; whereas *one is a general* question, which however answered, in the *affirmative* or *negative*, would apply to *particulars*. But supposing in each *particular* instance under our notice, we could descry the "*secret powers of nature*," the general question concerning *all* like causes would still remain unanswered ; and an universal conclusion could not logically be deduced from the particular

* Compare Sec. 4. p. 30, with Sec. 4. p. 34.

premises concerning it: as will be more fully argued in the discussion upon Dr. Brown's reasoning.

If it should be asked, (as Mr. Hume presently does,) how is it known when objects are similar upon any two occasions; the "sensible qualities may be the same, and not the *secret powers, upon which the Effects depend?*" I answer, this is to *shift* the question from the examination of *like Causes supposed*, to the consideration of the *method whereby their presence may be detected**. But this difficulty is met, and considered in, its proper place; I shall only here say, that as the *secret powers* are the real external unknown Causes in Nature, which determine the sensible qualities, as well as *every other Effect*; so when we find the sensible qualities the same on any two occasions,

* I should not here have taken notice of this objection, but that as Mr. Hume does suddenly shift the question, so I would not appear to avoid an answer to it: otherwise it is something too early to enter upon the subject; obliging me to make use of my argument previously to its complete developement. But the reader may pass over to the next Section if he please.

we are sure the secret powers are similar *thus far*, and therefore fitted to exhibit their further similar effects;—(or *combined secret powers and sensible qualities*;) and although some *unobserved* cause might creep in to alter the object, whilst appearing the same, yet this we do not *imagine* when we are not aware of it, especially in cases where the same sensible qualities have been regularly exhibited along with like secret powers; for this regularity is perceived as an *Effect*, for which there must be a proportional *Cause*, and begets a proportional belief accordingly.—We argue from the *regular Effects*, (the sensible qualities;) to the *regular Causes*, (the secret powers;) which having been equal to certain other *Effects or properties*, we expect again the same, under similar circumstances.—We argue from the regular *ends* nature keeps in view, up to nature's God, who ordained them, and who must be supposed still to continue true to those ends; and along with the grander operations of nature, we may often in many cases observe our own actions, and those of others, conspiring *only* to fashion similar objects. But when the *secret*

powers, and sensible qualities, are known, *or supposed the same*, the conclusion is demonstrative; *so must be the Effects*. Whilst, were it possible to know the secret powers in each *particular* past instance, *universal* truth would not thence result. Neither has Mr. Hume any right to make this argument; because to conceive “there may be secret powers which may change the Effects, dependent on them,” is to make use of the relation between Cause and Effect, as of a really necessary connexion, in order to oppose his adversary: a principle which he previously refuses to admit. Also the objection forms an illogical argument in another way. For it virtually draws a general conclusion from *two negative premises*. To assert, that like sensible qualities merely, will NOT produce like Effects; and, that *like sensible qualities* are NOT *like Causes*, is to separate the middle term both from the subject and from the predicate of the general question. By *such an argument* Mr. Hume is certainly right in supposing, that REASON cannot support “*our conclusions concerning the operations of Cause and Effect.*”

Having thus cleared a way, towards the comprehension of this relation of Cause and Effect, we will proceed to a definition of those terms in the next Section.

SECTION THE THIRD.

A Cause, therefore, is such action of an object, as shall enable it, in conjunction with another, to form a new nature, capable of exhibiting qualities varying from those of either of the objects unconjoined. This is really to be a producer of new being.—This is a generation, or *creation*, of qualities not conceived of, antecedently to their existence ;—and not merely an “ *idea always followed by another*,” on account of a “ customary association between them.”

An Effect is the produced quality exhibited to the senses, as the essential property of natures so conjoined. Necessary connexion of cause and effect is the obligation qualities have to inhere in their objects, and to exhibit their varieties according to the different human senses with which they come in contact. Power is but another word for efficient cause, or “ pro-

ductive principle ;” and signifies the *property* which lies in the *secret nature of objects*, when unobserved by the senses, and which determines the qualities that can be exhibited to them upon every new conjunction.—An *object* may be defined, a *combined mass of qualities* ; the result of proportional unknown circumstances in nature, meeting with the human senses.

But Mr. Hume’s three definitions of the relation of Cause and Effect are, in *many* respects, faulty, and not borne out by his own arguments ; for he defines a Cause “ an object followed by another, and where all the objects similar to the first are followed by objects similar to the second.” —Now, if he means an object that will in *future*, as in *past* times, be always followed by another ; an *invariable* necessity in the antecedent to be followed by its subsequent, his whole argument tends to prove the *contrary*, and to show that experience has power to answer for the *past* only, and cannot for the future ; for, that we may conceive a “ change in the course of nature,” and that imagination supplies only

the notion of *invariable* expectation from "custom;" that this is the sense of the passage containing the original definition, we may be sure of, from what follows; for he goes on to say, "or in other words, where if the first object had not been, the second never had existed;" but this idea expresses a much stricter necessity of connexion than does the relation of any number of objects, which had only followed each other in *past time*, however often their antecedency and subsequence had been repeated. Such a necessity is contradicted the whole way by the argument. It is quite another sentiment, from that which arises from the ideas of always *before and after*. That which requires another object to its existence, must be *necessarily connected* with it; and I contend that it is so connected, as a *new quality* of an altered mode of existence. But Mr. Hume says, it is only connected, as an *invariable* subsequent, must always be understood to require its *invariable* antecedent. —But I retort, Why does the definition assume more than the argument can possibly bear out?

How can the *invariableness* of the future be answered for by the experience of any invariableness in the past? It is truly impossible that it should be so. Custom can only, at the most, lead us to *expect* that the future would be similar to the past; but it never could so sufficiently answer for it, as to enable us to form a definition concerning its *absolute* INVARIABLENESS of *phenomenon*.

Indeed, in many cases there are *single* exceptions to *universal* experience, and to any habit of expectation founded on it; which at once proves Mr. Hume's definition to be erroneous; for hence the *invariableness* of the sequence becomes altered, and custom shown to be utterly incapable of affording an *universal definition*, of the relation in question.—Now, *experiment* is what decides as to a real and necessary cause, under given circumstances.—When an event happens under one set of circumstances, not under another in all respects the same, save ONE; *that one* is a *true cause*, and a *necessary one*; and under the same circumstances, it must be invariably wanted to

that end; and every mind feels it so, because it perceives that an *alteration* could not begin of itself. This, and nothing but this, is a *strict necessity*, and can enable the mind to predicate for the future as for the past.

But the first definition is also faulty in another instance; because in every just definition, the ideas that are included in the terms, must not suit any other object. Now many objects are invariably antecedents and subsequents, that are not Causes and Effects; and it can be no good definition, to warrant the arguing in a circle, which *this definition* evidently does.

The second definition is also erroneous, because although similar causes must have similar effects, yet *diverse* causes may produce the same effects also—therefore the *second object might exist* without the first, by the operation of any other cause efficient to it*. The third definition, viz.

* I make this remark however, rather with respect to Mr. Hume's notion of Cause than my own; in order to

"an object followed by another, and whose appearance always conveys the thought to that other," does not differ materially from the first—yet it is worthy of observation, that the thought always being carried by the appearance of one object to the idea of another, proves nothing but an *accidental though strong association of ideas*, and is in like manner objectionable, on account of *suiting other objects than the thing defined*. Every Andrew is not necessarily "*Simon Peter's Brother*," although my thought always recurs to that idea, upon every mention of the name of Andrew.

SECTION THE FOURTH.

It follows then from the definitions given in the preceding section, and the reasonings on which they are formed, that were a body, in all other respects resembling snow, to have the taste of salt and feeling of fire, it would be an extraordinary phenomenon, no doubt; and one which might for

show there is an inconsistency between his argument and his definition; for *diverse antecedents* might invariably be followed by *similar subsequents*; then, in each separate case the second object might exist without the first.

ought we know take place, but it would not be snow; and such a body could not fall from the clouds but, by new causes efficient to its formation; it would, therefore, be entirely a different object, and would require a new name; and the phenomenon could offer no ground for the conclusion, that reason does not afford an argument for the expectation of similar effects from similar causes.

Nature, it is true, varies all her operations; but not in a manner that can ever make it appear otherwise than a contradiction to reason, that it should be through interferences with her regular course. For instance, something similar to the case imagined does take place; we all know that various substances fall from the clouds; but they are all named by various names accordingly; they are known by reason to be different masses of qualities; different objects, which must have been produced by different circumstances. Such variety, therefore, offers no contradiction to our reason, our expectations, or our terms. Yet

Mr. Hume seems to think that nature, without a contradiction to our ideas, may be supposed to alter her course in the *determination of her qualities*; and occasion contrary and different qualities, from otherwise similar objects. Nature, no doubt, preserving in many objects certain appearances, to some of the senses, may vary the remaining qualities. A

But this cannot be, without her using preveing causes of an altered kind, efficient to the new production; and then it is a new object and must be *newly named*. Such events as these, which are nothing else than all the various events, in the universe, (for all things are *alike* to some of the senses, and *diverse* in others;) nature is full of; but this does not prove, there is not a *necessary connexion* between CAUSE AND EFFECT; and that *custom* only guides our expectations. On the contrary, it is because there can be no "*beginnings of existences*" by themselves, that we know, when new phenomena arise, from *apparently* similar circumstances, that we must lie

under a mistake; and that the new objects cannot be the same objects altered, and elicited from similar circumstances. We might as well deem meteoric stones to be snow, as a body, which had the taste of salt and the feeling of fire. Nature, therefore, cannot, when employing *like* causes in action, alter her course in determining different and contrary "*Effects*" from otherwise similar objects; because in such a case, these *new qualities* would absolutely be *un-
caused*; *different* qualities would be exhibited from *precisely similar conjunctions of
bodies*, i. e. *different* and *contrary* qualities, (or *Effects*) from otherwise similar objects, (or *Causes*) which is impossible.

Should it be said that nature is supposed to be employing *different* causes in action; by altering the "*secret powers*" (whilst the "*sensible qualities*" remain the same,) that it is in this way she changes her course—then the pre-*vening conjunctions of
bodies* which produced these secret powers, being supposed different; the *natures* of the objects are different; they are truly *other* objects, and there is no astonish-

ment at the production of their altered Effects; ~~there is no alteration in the course of nature~~; and the Phenomena will not support Mr. Hume's argument *against* reason, and in favour of custom only; it follows, ~~therefore~~, that if we imagine the course of nature *may change*, it must be under the notion of a *cause equivalent to it*:—~~in which case there is no contradiction offered to the notion of causation as founded on reason~~. But for nature otherwise to change, and to vary either her "*Effects*," or "*Secret powers*," without varying the causes or preventing circumstances whose junction formed the objects, whence these result;—is so obviously impossible, that we cannot even suppose the will and power of the Deity to be able to work the *contradiction*. He could not make a finite quality, *dependent* upon himself or some other cause for its exhibition, to become *independent* and able to *exist of itself*; he could not otherwise than by himself altering the determination of the causes that form the objects; then there is a cause for the alleged change—the objects are not *similar* objects; the *whole* preventing circum-

stances are not the same; and it is only *unlike* causes again that beget *unlike* effects; unlike objects that vary in their qualities.

But the following sentence*, which contains the passage alluded to, involves an ambiguity of expression, which ought to be noticed, lest it should appear as though I had mistaken it, and consequently my answer not appear sufficiently applicable, viz. "Nature may be supposed to change her course since it implies no contradiction, that an object *SEEMINGLY* like those which we have experienced, may be attended with different or contrary Effects." There is here an ambiguity of sense on account of the expression "*SEEMINGLY*;" for it may either intend, *an alteration in the determination of Effects from objects, in ALL OTHER respects similar, save in these CONTRARY effects*; or an "*ARBITRARY*" change in the "*secret powers*" "*which mix with the sensible qualities; and on which the effects entirely depend*" in either sense, such an arbitrary change in the course of

* Sec. 4. p. 36.

Nature, is 'a "CONTRADICTION TO REASON" and an IMPOSSIBILITY.

Mr. Hume however seems to use it in either of these senses, as the occasion serves; and "without conceiving there is much difference between them.

The former sense however appears to be that in which it is used, as applicable in the instance concerning the changes upon snow. Compare these *passages**, "may I not distinctly conceive, a body *in all other respects* resembling snow having the taste of salt, and feeling of fire,"—with†, "Every Effect is a distinct event from its Cause; and ever after it is suggested, its conjunction must appear *arbitrary* with its Cause, since there are always many other effects, which to *reason* might seem fully as consistent and natural." But it is in the latter sense, viz.: in the "*arbitrary*" alteration of the "*secret powers*," (*in order to form DIFFERENT*

* Essays, Vol. 2. Sec. 4. p. 36.

† Ibid. p. 30.

Causes for the determination of DIFFERENT Effects), which must explain the following passage*: "Let the course of nature be allowed hitherto ever so regular proves not that for the future it will continue so." "The secret nature of objects, and consequently all their effects and influences, may change without any change in the sensible qualities." In either of the senses in which Mr. Hume uses the notion in question, it is equally absurd; for as Cause is not by him granted, nature must be supposed to change her regular march *uncaused*; whether in striking off *different* and *contrary* qualities, from objects in *every other* respect similar, *save in these arbitrary and contrary determinations*; or in the mixing *different secret powers* amidst the *sensible qualities*. Nor will it answer for Mr. Hume to shift his position, and say; that the "secret powers" may be considered, as *changed* by the *regular operations of nature*; and that, on account of our inability to detect them,

* Ibid. p. 39. The method in which this idea begs the question, has been taken notice of before.

we are necessarily obliged to consider, "the sensible qualities ONLY, as like Causes; thereby concluding the Effects will be similar upon insufficient grounds; and this REASON, not able to support the idea of a really necessary connexion between them."

For upon this supposition, the *real* relation of Cause and Effect, is assumed as granted—

1st. In order to account for the change in the secret powers.

2dly. To account for the change in the effects dependent upon them.

And this is at once yielding the whole argument to the adversary *! enabling him justly to retort, that he makes use of the

* This sort of argument forms a sophism which logicians term "*ignoratio elenchi*;" "something being proved which is not necessarily inconsistent with the proposition maintained." See W. Logick, p. 240. And this is the real gist, of the whole of Mr. Hume's argument (*a posteriori*) and which is generally considered, I believe, as both acute and logical.

general principle concerning Cause and Effect (which is now granted), and which he supports upon "*general reasoning*," whereby, in many instances to *suspect*, and in many others to *detect*, unlike secret powers amidst the *sensible* qualities, by which means it becomes applicable, as an AXIOM founded on REASON, wherewith to try every kind of experience both in philosophy and common life—whilst also he can maintain—that unless it were for the knowledge of such a general principle, no knowledge of the "secret powers of nature in ever so many *past* instances, could be of any material service to us *for the future*."

All mathematical demonstration is built upon the notion; that where quantities, or diagrams, resemble each other, the relations which are true, with respect to ONE of each kind will be true with respect to *all* others of a *like* kind; ONLY *because there is nothing else to make a difference among them*. So, if in all *past time*, such *secret powers* could be shown necessarily connected with such *sensible qualities*; yet in *future* it could not thence

be proved to continue so, unless supported by the axioms;—that like Causes must exhibit like Effects, and that DIFFERENCES CANNOT ARISE of themselves.

Upon the whole; therefore, Mr. Home must be understood to mean, that as we know nothing of “*Cause and Effect*,” or of the “*secret processes of nature*,” so she might be supposed indifferently to strike off contrary Effects from similar preveining Causes; or else to alter their “*secret powers*,” whilst their FORMATION was produced by the same means as usual. Thus that exactly the same circumstances might prevent the falling of snow, (precisely the same objects might unite to produce that object,) upon any two occasions, yet, it might have the taste of salt or feeling of fire! That the “*secret powers of vegetation*” might in future be altered; although the seasons should roll the same as before; and every power in nature be only equal to the contrary supposition!

To all which I answer, nature cannot alter her course when she is employing *simi-*

lar means in the formation of objects, by changing any of the "Secret powers," or altering any Effects; because the preventing circumstances being supposed in any two cases similar, there would be no assignable reason for the difference. A difference, or change, *either* in the "secret powers" of objects, or the *Effects* of Causes, (other things remaining the same) is exactly equal to the CREATION of so many new qualities, which could not, without a CONTRADICTION, arise of themselves.

I can conceive it said by some, although Mr. Hume would have no right to do so, that a miraculous interference might alter the course of nature; not so, not in determining the production of dissimilar objects from similar causes. No miracle could form an *uncaused* change in nature (which is the notion in question).

A miraculous interference, that is, an interference of God as a cause, might alter the production of objects, yet still there is a cause equivalent to the *change*, and again *unlike* objects beget *unlike* qualities: I

therefore draw a conclusion from the whole of this reasoning, exactly contrary to Mr. Hume's inference from his; admitting indeed with him, that before experience we cannot know what *particular* effects will flow from given causes; yet *after experience* I judge that it is "*reason* which guides us in our expectations; because it convinces us, that instances" (of *Effects*,) "of which we have had no experience must resemble" (when Causes are similar) "those of which we have had experience, for that the course of nature must continue uniformly the same," *by the regular determination of like Cause and Effect.*

The same kind of answer will serve for other paradoxical questions which Mr. Hume puts in these Essays.

Is there, says he, any more intelligible proposition than to affirm, that all the trees will flourish in December and January, and decay in May and June? Certainly not, to those who conceive that the "course of nature may without an implied contradiction alter the determination of Effects that

proceed from like Causes," or, which is the same thing, exhibit different or contrary qualities, from similar objects. But according to the method I have laid down of viewing the operations of nature, there cannot be a more *unintelligible proposition* than to assert of those trees, which have usually flourished in May and June, that they may cease to do so, and only thrive in December and January.

So far from the mind being able distinctly "to conceive" such a change in their qualities, when the proof has been once afforded, that it is their nature to require warmth for their growth; and that cold kills their blossoms; it must be ever after considered impossible for these objects to affect qualities not originally included in their *natures*;—or, for their *natures* to alter, without a cause equivalent to the alteration—or a cause equivalent to it to be *supposed*, without REASON being the foundation of the whole principle of CAUSATION.

To suppose that the circumstances which at first stamped them the objects they are,

could enable them to preserve themselves similar objects, and yet arbitrarily put on wholly contrary qualities, seems to be about as reasonable as to assert that black may become white, and white become black, and yet each colour merit its original name, of *black* or *white*; whilst, at the same time, these changes take place on account of such a "change in the course of nature," as determine that although all the causes in action are sufficient only to produce black, yet white shall appear; and *vice versa*. Indeed, before "*nature could be conceived to alter her course*;" the question about which Mr. Hume is *examining experience* (namely, whether she will support the knowledge of the necessary connexion of like objects and their qualities,) must be supposed to be *already* answered in the *negative*; and that it is *KNOWN that nature may be supposed to exhibit similar antecedents followed by different subsequents, or in other words that there is no necessary connexion between like objects and like qualities*; which is begging the question; and in a different way from that in which he means to answer it, for he means to

support the doctrine of necessary connexion, though upon principles peculiarly his own. Should it be said that I assume the contrary position, I answer, I do not *assume* it; but have previously proved the general conclusion, that "all like causes must have like effects; (because otherwise, *objects would begin of themselves* :) in order purposely to show that "nature cannot alter her course." Mr. Hume makes also a great mistake in supposing because we can conceive in the fancy the existence of objects contrary to our experience, that therefore they may really exist in nature; for it by no means follows that things which are incongruous in nature, may not be contemplated by the imagination, and received as possible until reason shows the contrary. Indeed, the fallacy, on which his whole sceptical doctrines are *built*, may be seen at the very outset of his first Essay. He imagines it impossible to conceive the *contrary* to any *known relation* in quantities; but that we may *conceive the contrary of every matter of fact as possible*—impossible, under the *same circumstances*, and if the *circumstances alter*, the fact is a *different*

fact; but not a *contrary one*—any more than the *different* relations of various quantities are not *contrary* to each other. Mr. Hume did not perceive that all objects whatever in relation to us, are but masses of certain qualities elicited from certain prevenient circumstances, and therefore incapable of having different qualities, (or of shewing diverse effects) whilst yet they remain similar objects *born under like circumstances*. He did not perceive that the “*productive principle*,” or the *Cause of an Effect*, is to be found *in the junction of objects already existing*, by which new objects are formed; but conceiving the nature of the operation of this principle to be wholly unknown, he imagined and alleged all things to be only “*conjoined, and not connected*,” and that they might change their places fortuitously; custom only connecting them in the fancy; and a contrary fancy as capable of unconnecting them again.

Strange philosophy! “Effects may be supposed non-existent this minute, and existent the next;” (and so in suspense,)

and may therefore “begin their existence by themselves.”—If this be so, undoubtedly we want no Causes for our Effects; our Rose-trees may suspend their blossoms in June; the flower require no warmth for its expansion, and remain non-existent till December!

That different objects have different qualities, all are well acquainted with;—The Chinese rose, and the holley, can thrive in Winter; but the same kind of rose, that hitherto has grown only in spring, and flourished in summer, can no more put forth its leaves and expand its blossoms in winter, than the mercury in a *tried* thermometer can suddenly contract to the freezing point, in a burning summer’s day.

Let us however, before quitting this important and interesting argument, chuse an example to prove, that “nature cannot without a contradiction be imagined to alter her course.” Let a receiver be imagined void of every substance whatever; and nothing but an *uncoloured space* within it. Now it is surely the “course of nature,”

for this uncoloured space to *remain as it is*, without some *cause steps in to alter it*; and if *some cause steps in to alter it*, “nature does *not* alter her course.” Then let nature be supposed to alter her course, and a *scarlet colour uncaused* to enter. Does not every reader perceive the impossibility that scarlet uncaused could enter? that it could “start of itself into existence?” yet such is the idea that is veiled under Mr. Hume’s argument;—that different and contrary qualities can take place in similar circumstances; that a rose may blow in winter, when the causes were efficient to its blowing *only in June*! No circumstances are supposed changed; and yet “*of itself*,” the nature of the rose may change!—and so may a new phenomenon take place in an *empty receiver*, as the entrance of a scarlet colour, or of a dove, or any other imaginable being, without an equivalent change of circumstances for its introduction.

The sum of Mr. Hume’s argument is, that we knowing nothing of the “secrets of nature,” we cannot know there is really a necessary connexion between ob-

jects; but *imagining* there is, this *imagination* arises, from a CUSTOMARY OBSERVATION, of *the invariableness of their antecedence and subsequence*;—which invariableness, however, does not prove, that each connexion may be more than an *insulated casual event*; not obligatory in nature; therefore *other subsequent* events might, without a contradiction, be imagined to happen after *similar antecedents*, and a *different order of events* might be supposed in the “course of nature.”

Now shortly the whole of this reasoning concerning the *possibility of nature altering her course*, is but a circle! for the argument is invented to show that CUSTOM *not* REASON, must be the only ground of our belief in the relation of Cause and Effect.—But it is *impossible to imagine such a change in nature*, unless *reason* were previously excluded as the principle of that relation;—*and it is impossible to exclude reason as the principle of that relation*, except by supposing *that nature may alter her course*.—Thus the idea of *causation*, is founded only on *experience**, ex-

* “The opinion that a cause is necessary to every
“new production arises from experience.”—TREATISE.

perience is supplied with arguments by *custom* not by *reason* * and custom is supported in her authority by a supposed change in nature †, *impossible* to any idea of causation ‡, *unless* ALREADY SUPPOSED TO BE MERELY THE EFFECT OF CUSTOM §.

Nor must we conclude this branch of the subject, without observing the contradiction that lies in the very endeavour to persuade the world that *custom is the true* "CAUSE OF BELIEF" in necessary connexion, when before assenting to such a doctrine it must give up all usual habits of thinking upon the subject, and believe upon Mr.

* "All inferences from experience are Effects of *custom* not of *reasoning*."—ESSAYS.

† "Since it implies no contradiction that the course of nature may change, there can be no demonstrative arguments in the case."—ESSAYS.

"Wherever there is a propensity without being impelled by any reasoning we say this propensity is the *Effect* of custom."—ESSAYS.

‡ "If *there* were nothing to bind objects together the inferences from present facts would be entirely precarious."—ESSAYS.

§ "Our belief in *causation* is the *Effect* of custom."—ESSAYS.

Hume's reasoning, what it never before believed!—

Mr. Hume himself recapitulates his argument thus :

“ Every idea is copied from some preceding impression (idea being an Effect *derived* from impression as its Cause).
 “ In all single instances of the operation of bodies there is nothing that produces, nor consequently can suggest the idea of necessary connexion. But when *many* instances appear, we *feel* a new impression, a customary connexion in the thought, between one object and its usual attendant*.”

Now this method of placing the argument is but the statement of *another circle*; for *causation* is used as the very principle which lies at the foundation of

* Compare the Treatise and Essays,—in both works *impressions* are considered as absolutely necessary to *cause* ideas—to create them;—to *produce* them;—they are considered as the truly “productive principle” of ideas—*Objects* without which they could not exist.

the whole system; and afterwards, we are desired to search for the *impression*, which is the CAUSE of that EFFECT, viz. the *idea causation*.

And it is no answer to say that the notion of causation is spoken of in his own sense, not in his adversary's; for in either sense it is equally illogical, to prove the conclusion by the premises, and the premises by the conclusion.

What should we think of an author, who, in attempting to account for the original discovery of metals, proved that it was effected by the use of instruments framed from a material termed *iron*, drawn from the bowels of the earth?

In like manner there is *a want of logical precision* in referring all the principles which connect our ideas to three kinds of associations amongst them; of which *causation* is ranked as one;—and then (in order to account for causation,) shew the power that lies in the associations of ideas. Such a notion ends in the formation of a mere

identical proposition; *vis.* a certain association of ideas is causation; and causation consists in an association of ideas.

But there is still another passage in Mr. Hume's Essays, of greater consequence than any I have quoted, or argued on; and which I shall yet detain the reader for a few moments in order to consider; it is this following:

"As reason is incapable of any variation, the conclusions which it draws from one circle, are the same which it would form from surveying all the circles in the universe. But no man having seen one body move after being impelled by another would infer, that *every body* will move after a like impulse*."

This passage I consider as containing the whole gist of Mr. Hume's error, and therefore it points out where my answer should meet it. The error consists, in mak-

* Essays, Vol. 2. Sec. 5, p. 47.

ing an *incomplete comparison*, between the two subjects compared. *Every body* is taken in an indefinite sense for every *kind of body*; but *circle* is not taken for every *kind of figure*. The reason whence the CONCLUSIONS concerning all circles are *general*, is upon the very principle of Cause and Effect; for I know by experience, that upon the first study of Mathematical science, I found much difficulty in a philosophical objection I could not easily answer; namely; that the relations of the quantities in one figure did not seem *necessarily* applicable to *all* of a like kind; until I perceived that the affections of *all*, were INVOLVED in *one* of *each kind*; as there was nothing to occasion a *difference* amidst their relations. Now then let the data be the same, and the IMPULSE *given* not only be *like*, but the BODY *given be like*; and I conceive that every man, and every child, would expect, upon a second trial, that the same body would move in the same manner as before. The inference would be drawn from the mind perceiving, (in the first instance,) that no motion would have taken place except from the conjunction of

the body with the impulsive force; and in the second case would add to the memory of this Effect, the reasoning, that there being nothing else to make a difference, a like Effect would again take place. Nay, I am persuaded, that reason might go so far as, from calculating the proportions of the impulse used, and the body moved, to conclude the varieties, which would take place under proportionably different circumstances.

Mr. Hume draws two inferences of much consequence from his doctrine; 1st, that as our *custom of thinking* is not the *operation of nature*, so we have no positive proof, that a cause is wanted for the existence of the universe as of a truly "*productive principle*." 2dly, That it is *unreasonable to believe in miracles*, because it is foolish to allow of our *customary habits of thinking*, which arise from "experience in the course of nature," to be interfered with by an "*experience of a less frequent occurrence*;" which dependence upon testimony can only afford. This latter inference he professes in his Essay against Miracles. The

former opinion is less openly acknowledged; not being stated in explicit terms, but of immediate inference from the doctrine; and which he was well aware of, was the case.

The sum of my answer and argument is, that although we know not the "secrets of nature," yet we know that nothing can "begin its own existence;" therefore there must truly be a "productive principle," a cause necessary for every new existence in nature;—that we gain the knowledge of a "necessary connexion between Cause and Effect," by an *experimentum crucis*, and therefore no greater number of invariable antecedents and consequents are wanted, than what is necessary, in order to observe what circumstances affect each other, or the contrary. That neither *fancy* nor *custom* creates the notion by an association of ideas; but the UNDERSTANDING gains it, by an observation of what is *that circumstance, without which a new object does not exist*. Things therefore could not change their places, nor

nature alter her course, without a contradiction.

Hence it is that a cause is wanted in the universe equivalent to the change from non-existence to existence! And also that it is not more unreasonable to believe in miracles than in any other extraordinary phenomena in nature, when we may suppose, that *efficient Causes have been in action*, towards their production; and that *final causes* are of *sufficient weight to justify the altered work of Providence!*

But a minute investigation of Mr. Hume's Essay on Miracles is much wanted. The purport of it, and the method by which it is drawn out as a consequence from the three preceding Essays, has not (that I know of) been observed by the learned. One would think at first sight that Mr. Hume, in admitting that the "course of nature might change," conceded much to the Christians. Instead of which he adroitly turns round upon them, and says, "so it may in fact;" but in "custom" you *think it cannot*, therefore it is absurd to allow this custom

of thought to be overthrown by testimony. In this struggle of fancy, against fancy, the more powerful must and ought to prevail!— If these pages should find favour before the public, an examination of the Essay on Miracles is intended to follow them ; without which the answer to these on Cause and Effect is hardly complete.

Should an objection arise to my doctrine, that on account of supposing causes to act as the junctions of different qualities, and yet by pushing back all causes to the ONE UNCAUSED ESSENCE ; I thereby prevent the idea of him being reposed in as a Cause ; as he forms ONE object only : I answer, that the uncaused essence, however mysterious in his nature, and however awful and distant to our speculations, must nevertheless have attributes ; or in other words, its own peculiar qualities, which required no former beings, to *give birth to them*.

The unions of such qualities among themselves, might well be equal to the going forth of the great Creation ! The

union of *wisdom*, with benevolence; and of these with the "*power*" arising out of the inexhaustible resources of his essence, might well occasion the "starting forth" of innumerable beings; the highest orders of which, without the slightest philosophical contradiction, might be considered as coeval and coequal with the Father "as touching the Godhead." But after this, the wide universe, with all its gradations of wonderful beings, with all its powers of life and heat, and motion, must have come out from him according to the laws with which they were endowed. And although the original undivided essence, whose qualities were equal to such creation, must be considered as antecedent to his own work; yet the *operation* of that essence must ever have been the same from all eternity; and in that point of view, the *junction* of wisdom and benevolence, with whatever "*capacities*" of that essence were efficient to their ends, must have been accompanied with their instant synchronous Effects;—the *formation of inferior beings*. "Let there be light," said God, "and there was light."

Thus God, the universal Father, and with him any noble *manifestations* of his essence; then archangel, and angel; man (or beings analogous to him) and animals; mind, and matter; may be considered as having existed eternally, coming forth from him, living in him, and supported by him; whilst an analogous state of being must be expected to continue eternally, in like manner—and it may also be expected as a circumstance consistent and probable with the whole of so grand an arrangement, that some inferior orders of beings may be raised in the scale of nature, to be inhabitants of a kindlier world than this; with enlarged capacities for happiness and virtue.

The consideration of the method the understanding has recourse to, in order to judge of the probable presence of similar causes on the contrary, will come under our view in the next Chapter.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

I SHALL now proceed to apply the principles already laid down, to the examination of the question concerning the guidance of our expectations in ordinary life, which question forms the subject of the Essay entitled Sceptical Doubts concerning the operations of the Understanding. The question itself might be shortly stated thus : —why does the operation of the apparent qualities of an object upon the senses, lead the mind to expect the action of its untried qualities, when placed in fit circumstances for their operation ?

Why should bread, on account of its formerly nourishing the body, be expected to nourish it again ? why may it not, whilst it preserves “ its colour, consistence, &c.” nevertheless destroy the human frame ?

In my answer to these questions, I shall allow to Mr. Hume, that the memory of the

sensible and *apparent* qualities of any object, is necessary to the acknowledgment of it as the same body, upon every acquaintance with it; also that the *memory of what its qualities will be*, when conjoined with any other, is also requisite to the *expectation* of any farther qualities arising from it.

The idea of these must be associated with the sensible qualities; but the knowledge that they will assuredly take place, when existing in like circumstances, is founded upon much stronger principles than those of custom and habit.

It is founded—

First,—Upon a quick, steady, accurate observation, *whether the preveining causes are the SAME, from which an object is elicited in any PRESENT instance, as upon a FORMER one*;—and,

2dly,—Upon a demonstration, that if the observation hath been correct, the result—(i. e. the *whole* effects or qualities,) must necessarily be the same as heretofore;

otherwise contrary qualities, as already discussed, would arise without a cause, i. e. a *difference begin of itself*, which has been shown to be impossible*. Thus the first step the mind takes, in order to be satisfied that the same *apparent qualities* in any object will be attended with like "*secret powers*," is the consideration, from the surrounding circumstances, of what the pre-vening causes were, which gave *birth to the object*; and therefore whether the *apparent qualities* are *truly* the accompaniments of the *same nature* or not.—As for instance, we can form a notion almost with certainty, whether the substance placed upon the table has been truly elicited from such causes, as could alone produce the compound object bread. Whether the pure liquid offered, be the result of such circum-

* It has already been shown upon mathematical principles, that a *difference* in the *result* of equal unions, can no more arise out of the *mixtures of any other qualities of objects*, than from the *junctions of those of number*. If ONE added to ONE, bear out the result TWO, *once*; it must ever do so; and if a certain proportion of *blue and yellow particles*, form a mixture termed GREEN, *once*; GREEN in like manner shall ever *thence* result.

stances as render it water, or of such others, as may prove it, (notwithstanding its apparent quality to the eye,) to be spirits of ammonia? &c. It is not the *mere* appearance of the external qualities, which can determine the mind to expect certain effects; it is only that *appearance in conjunction with the recollection of the probable causes, that have produced the objects in question*, and which lead the mind to suppose the said objects to be truly bread, water, or hartshorn; and therefore impossible not to be capable of exhibiting all their qualities, and none other than their qualities.

The first step belongs to those combined qualities of mind called good sense; and will always be made with an assurance and propriety in proportion to it. The nature of its operation is this;—the mind knows that different objects have the same apparent qualities to some of the senses, which cannot afford a sufficient test concerning the farther exhibition of others;—but observation enables it to judge, when an object is presented, what *causes have*

been used in its formation; and if it perceives that the causes have been similar, it *knows* that the whole effects or qualities must necessarily be similar; otherwise there might be an uncaused "change in the course of nature;" which, although sometimes *philosophers* imagine possible, *no ordinary minds* ever do, because they never think a *change* can take place of itself; or in other words, qualities begin their own existences

It is nothing but this reasoning concerning the *causes*, used in the *formation of an object*, which makes us argue to the "secret powers," and the similar appearances only guide us, in as far as they form a proof that they are truly the same objects, with respect to those appearances; for *SIMILAR objects* could not have *different appearances*.

The way to try the case is to observe the action of the mind, when two objects are presented of precisely similar appearance, but which may be thought, on account

of the uncertainty as to the circumstances which excited them, possibly, to possess different properties.

We always enquire, in such cases, as to some *leading circumstance*, which may enable us to judge what causes were used in their formation.

If an ignorant person, for instance, whom we perceived could not read, were about to serve us in a chymist's shop with *Epsom salts*; we, being aware that *oxalic acid* had the same *apparent* qualities, should not feel an assurance in the "*secret powers*;" but would cautiously enquire for some mark, by which to be guided in our notion as to their *original FORMATION*;—i. e. as to what mass of qualities *apparent*, and *secret*, had been combined by the hand of nature, or art, in the object before us. It is here that Mr. Hume's mistake is evident in the statement of what he deems an irresolvable difficulty, concerning the method of the mind in the *guidance* of its expectation with respect to the *untried qualities*, or "*Effects*," of the objects presented to it.

These are his words,—

“The two following propositions are far from being the same; I have found that such an object has always been attended with such an Effect; and I foresee that all other objects, in *appearance similar*, will be attended with similar effects.” The connexion between the two propositions is not intuitive; of what nature is it then? I answer, WE NEVER DO MAKE THE CONNEXION—we *never do foresee that objects similar in appearance ONLY, will be attended with similar Effects.*—But as *truly similar* objects, must necessarily *appear* the same, we combine these acknowledged similarities, with the circumstances which we are aware of, as *most probable to have been used in their formation*, and thence judge whether the object be *truly* a mass of similar Effects or qualities, elicited from like causes in action, or the contrary.

If the causes in action have been the same; (and we are pretty good judges if

they have, or have not, in the vast variety of ordinary cases with which we have to do,) then the objects in question must necessarily possess the whole qualities which belong to their natures, whether taken *singly*, and acting *alone* on the senses; or acting in *conjunction with another object*, and exhibiting those *further qualities*, which are usually termed “*Effects*.”

Thus Mr. Hume’s statement—“ I have
“ found such an object has always been at-
“ tended with such an effect; and I foresee
“ other objects, in *appearance* similar, will
“ be attended with similar effects;” is not
the state of the human mind in any given
circumstance. It should rather run thus,
(although the familiarity we have from in-
fancy with the objects of life prevent the
notion from being so distinctly formed,
much less expressed, as to be easily detected
when called upon.)

Here is an object which has been the
result of LIKE CAUSES IN ACTION, *now as for-*
merly. The *whole* mass of Effects, which

these causes once produced, must necessarily *be again* capable of being exhibited in like appropriate circumstances.

It may also be added, that when an object in nature is, on account of some governing circumstance relating to it, considered as a similar object with another; because that governing circumstance points out the creating causes of it; then the "Effects," as well as the *apparent* qualities, enter into its definition, and *bread* stands as a sign of *all the ideas under the term*, and of *nothing but the ideas*.

It receives that name on account of its *tried qualities*, and it retains it, when *known to have been formed by those creating causes*, that necessarily can only determine *similar effects*.

If the human body is in the same state on any occasion, as on that when bread nourished it; there is as great a necessity it should again *nourish*, as that it should be *white*.

Thus all experimental reasoning consists in an *observation*, and a *demonstration*, as has before been shown;—an *observation*, whether the circumstances from which an object is produced, and in which it is placed, are the same upon one occasion as upon another;—and a *demonstration*, that if it is so, *all its exhibitions will be the same*. But Mr. Hume asks in another question of the same nature, why we judge *otherwise* concerning the “Effects,” (or untried qualities), following the apparent qualities, in some other objects.

“ Nothing, says he, so like as eggs; “ yet no one, on account of this apparent “ similarity, expects the same taste and “ relish in all of them;” “ Now where is “ that process of reasoning, which from one “ instance, draws a conclusion so different “ from that which it infers from a hundred “ others?”

The reason is, because it is one of the *tried, known, qualities* of eggs, to become soon changed in their flavour; without any great indication of such change becoming

apparent to the eye;—therefore again, there is *not* a connexion between the apparent qualities, and “secret powers,” and we should enquire if *we doubted*; concerning *some circumstance before tasting* that might afford a *discreet judgment*, some ground for conceiving that *only* those causes, had hitherto been in action, which had been likely to produce *fresh eggs*.

This instance forms an argument on my side of the question, rather than on Mr. Hume’s; as it shows there is not an absolute connexion, (and that the mind never thinks there is,) between *the mere APPEARANCES*, and the “*Effects*” of an object;—but that we judge concerning the probability of the method in which an object has been *formed*, and of *the circumstances it may have been placed in afterwards*, as *likely or not to alter it*; before we announce, whether the *apparent* qualities are indications of those “*secret powers, on which the Effects entirely depend.*”

Thus I not only assert, that *these are*

“the steps” the mind takes, from *experiment* to *expectation*; namely, ONE OF A HIGH PROBABILITY, that the preveining circumstances which determine those *masses of Effects*, (or qualities) called *objects*, have rendered them *the same* upon a present occasion, as upon a past; AND ONE OF DEMONSTRATION, that if they are the same objects, *all the unexhibited* qualities, or *effects*, must also be THE SAME; but I also affirm, that “*custom*” is not, cannot, be the principle on which the notion of necessary connexion between Cause and Effect is really founded; and that with respect to the most familiar objects of our life it has only a partial operation, in governing our expectations of the future. I grant that custom or an association of ideas, arising from those habits which infix ideas in the mind, is the foundation of all *memory*; and therefore similar appearances, suggest the *remembered unexhibited accompanying qualities* of objects; but it will not suit *all* the phenomena; it will not give the *assurance* that the accompanying untried qualities, must of necessity take place; and that the object in question

merits the name assigned to it. In order to prove this proposition, let us try any of the various strongly associated circumstances, which govern the mind, where clearly the suggestion to the imagination, can arise from nothing else but association of ideas. The ideas of these may always be disjoined from each other, without any apparent inconceivableness to the fancy; which is always the case in endeavouring to imagine a *similar cause* to take place with *one we have before known*, and a *different Effect* follow, from *that* which had *previously followed it*.

Let any school-boy, who always joins the first two lines in Virgil together, endeavour to imagine one line only written, without the other; he can do it; or that Virgil might have made another line, the first remaining the same; he can; one is not the *cause* of the other; nor, are they necessarily connected. But when he says, twice 2 are 4, he finds that the consequence of two units being taken two times over, necessarily exhibit four units to the mind; and cannot be disjoined from that result,

while the terms are spoken of in the same sense.

Like Causes necessarily *include*, and therefore *produce* and *exhibit* their *Effects*. The mind indeed may be forced from every recollection of habit, and consider the qualities of an object apart from each other, as in any other association: but the mind never can consider them as *possible* to exist *apart in nature*; it never for a moment supposes it but *inconceivable*, and impossible, that they should be “non-existent this moment, and “existent the next” without conjoining to them the idea of a cause or “productive principle.”

The only difficulty the mind has to do with, in forming a right judgment concerning its expectations of the qualities of objects, is the probability, or the contrary, whether the circumstances which formed them, are the same as heretofore or not.—But this part of the question, we always consider with more or less nicety of induction; and do not believe them to be so, from external appearances only, but

from those circumstances which enable us to know, what *course nature was taking, when she stamped them such as we see them.*

We judge in short that nature, in the continuance of her plan, is constant still to her own great ends; where the first beginnings of the work are wholly out of our cognizance.

We judge from the memory, of the parts we have ourselves taken in the disposition of Causes.

We judge from the knowledge we have had of the actions of others, and of the parts they have also been performing in their disposition; and when these are all in the affirmative, towards the probability of like Causes having been in action, in the formation of any object immediately concerning us; then we judge that the similar appearances, are qualities, of a like object, which only remains to be tried, to justify the assumption that *it is the same*; and that it deserves *the name* which has

been bestowed on it accordingly. I think this answers the whole argument, and is sufficient to prove, that "*reason*" not "*custom*" is the great guide of human life; convincing us, that the "instances of which we have had no experience, must resemble those of which we have had experience, for that the course of nature must continue uniformly the same."

SECTION THE SECOND.

In the course of writing these pages, I have met with some passages in the works of Mr. Locke, which when compared with the whole of Mr. Hume's argument, (*à posteriori*;) must be considered as forming the basis of that elaborate and inconclusive reasoning. Mr. Locke says, "there is a supposition that *nature works regularly* in the production of things, and sets the boundaries to each species;—whereas any one who observes their different qualities, can hardly doubt that many of the individuals called by the same name, are in their *internal constitution* different from one another."

Again; "Let the complex idea of gold, be made up of whatever other qualities you please, malleableness will not appear to depend on that complex idea. The connexion that malleableness has with those other qualities, being only by the intervention of the real collection of its insensible parts; which since we know not, it is impossible we should perceive that connection, &c."

In another place he has; "But we are so far from being admitted into the *secrets of nature*, that we scarce so much as ever approach the first step towards them."

The parallel passages in Mr. Hume's writings I need not again quote, especially as, if the reader has been interested in the course of this discussion, they will immediately recur to his memory.

Now Mr. Locke never meant to say that the differences of species could take place, excepting by the *regular operations of CAUSES, necessarily connected with their EFFECTS*; for he considered the *sensible*

qualities of bodies, as dependant upon their internal constitution ; which is both to acknowledge the relation of Cause and Effect, as also to conceive the *sensible qualities*, to be the EFFECTS of the *secret powers**.

Both of these principles Mr. Hume denies ; saying expressly of the latter—" It is acknowledged on all hands, there is no connection between the sensible qualities, and those secret powers of objects, on which the effects entirely depend."— Which latter remark I consider not only as erroneous, but astonishing ! in as much as the ideas in this part of his Essay, are an obvious expansion of those of Mr. Locke, who is an *exception* to the notion of an universal agreement to this opinion ; (being *one*, at least, and in authority equal to many, who does not acknowledge it.) The doubt however which Mr. Locke throws out, although it does in no respect affect the general prin-

* " That every thing has a real constitution, whereby it is, what it is, and on which its sensible qualities depend, is past doubt."—Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding.

ciples concerning causation ; yet it regards the difficulty there is in the *detection* of like objects, on account of our inability to form a judgment concerning their *internal constitutions*, from the *mere appearance* of their sensible qualities.

I consider Mr. Locke renders the difficulty something greater than it need be ; although he acknowledges that a similarity in the sensible qualities forms an argument of high probability, (though short of demonstration,) in favor of the presence of truly similar objects.

For as the secret, external, unknown powers or qualities, in nature ; determine the sensible qualities as their *effects*, as well as every other effect, or property ; so when we perceive the sensible qualities in any instances to be *like*, we know that *as far as they go*, they are LIKE *Effects*, from like SECRET *constitutions* ; which *secret constitutions* having been once able to determine certain effects, may do the same again ; and not only *may*, but *must* do

so again, *unless something has* occurred unobserved to make a difference among them.

In order to form a judgment if any thing is likely to have occurred towards making such an *alteration*; the mind has recourse to several observations and reasonings. — For considering that a certain figured, limited, portion of extended matter in nature, does by the action of the *self same particles*, exhibit different qualities, according to the different senses they meet, or variety of objects, with which they mix; so it applies these masses to the examination of more senses than one, for an higher certainty in this matter; knowing it to be very rare, but that a diversity is detected among the particles, by some *one* sense, at least. The senses, therefore, are considered capable of *nearly* detecting the similarity of internal constitutions; and this upon such a *regularity in fact* of the course of nature, which must itself be looked upon as a general Effect, from a general Cause.

Nevertheless the proposition founded on these trials, is but a probability, although a high one.

But, 2dly. The mind has always a regard to the *method* taken by *nature* and *art* in the FORMATION of an object. When these are similar; the MASSES of *Effects*, or *objects*, are necessarily similar; and such therefore will be *their* Effects in *their* turn. Then these *forming objects* are still silently traced backwards; in order to perceive if their production hath been similar—till we rest at last in those grand objects and operations in nature, which we have found so universally regular to certain ends, that upon the *general relation* of Cause and Effect, (as applicable to this particular case,) we *conclude*, that such a *regular like Effect*, can only be the result of a *like* continual cause; which shall not alter as long as the GREAT FIRST CAUSE doth not alter his pleasure therein. Thus we trace the *sensible qualities* of bread to the SECRET CONSTITUTIONS which have partly been put in action, by the sower and reaper of corn, the operations of the miller and the baker; and beyond these to the

influence of the air, the sun, and the juices of the earth ; which objects as they originally seem to have “ come forth from the Father of man ” for his use, so have they ever continued too true to their destination, not to be considered as dependant on that “ God of seasons,” who has ordained the nourishment of his children to arise from “ *bread, earned by the sweat of their brow.*”

It is, on account of these reasons, (that in answer to Mr. Hume) I say, that “ other bread will also nourish, when a body of a like colour and consistency has frequently done so ; and which remains free from the suspicion of any other beings having been concerned in its FORMATION than those alluded to. *Frequency of repetition*, abstracted from the *principle of CAUSATION as a CONCLUSION already drawn* from “ *general reasoning,*” is not a circumstance sufficient to generate such a principle, either from *custom*, or aught else ; but being previously known and believed in ; *frequency of repetition* becomes legitimately to be considered as an *Effect*, from a *Cause*, equally constant and general in its exhibition ; and

thereby begets a *reasonable*, as well as a customary dependance, upon the *necessary connexion*, that is between such regular Cause and Effect.

Thus the most ignorant conceive ; *first* that qualities cannot begin of themselves ; for there is as quick and accurate a perception, of natural contradictions in terms, amidst the least as the most learned of men : they therefore believe in *Cause*, as a “ productive principle ” in general. Secondly, they believe that regularity in nature is an Effect whose *Cause* they may regularly depend on, as a corollary with the preceding principle. Thirdly, they believe there is the intimate connexion of Cause and Effect between the secret powers, and sensible qualities of objects ; conceiving that an OUTWARD *indefinite object*, which when it meets with the eye presents to it a certain colour, and with the touch a certain consistency, and which they believe to be FORMED from certain materials, will *also*, upon trial, be palatable to the taste, agreeable to the stomach, and nourishing to the body.

Thus when Mr. Hume says, “ I require *for my information* what reasoning it is that leads men, from the mere sensible qualities of things to expect their future Effects?” he requires the statement of an argument, which in fact is never made ; for men conceive that it is *something indefinite* ; i. e. a certain mass of particles determined into that mass by forming powers equivalent to it, which meeting with the eyes, is seen of a defined colour, with the touch yields the sense of a certain consistency, and when entering the stomach shall be enjoyed as a satisfaction to hunger*. *None ever suppose*, that it is what is *first seen* and felt—that it is *colour and consistency* which *afterwards* NOURISHES.—*They suppose it is that which is sown and reaped, and kneaded and baked ; which seen, or unseen ; touched or untouched ; is FITTED TO NOURISH ; but being seen, shall be white or brown ; and being felt, shall be of a less or greater*

* This part of the subject again touches upon the Berkleyan theory, concerning external nature ; and the opinions ordinary minds have of the *external existence*, or the contrary, of the sensible qualities : upon *which point* Hume and Berkeley are at variance.

compressibility. The *sensible* qualities are only considered as signs of the secret powers,—which *secret powers* are understood to be determined by certain similar processes of *art*, mixed with the grand and regular operations of nature. When the *formation* of objects can be less accurately detected; their similarity of internal constitution becomes more doubtful, from the mere appearance of *some* of the sensible qualities only;—for, the greater number of qualities which are exhibited as similar to the senses, the higher does the proof become, of the secret powers being also similar.

Fourthly.—The mind, (of ordinary persons especially), though appearing to reason upon this subject in a *circle*, yet in reality escapes the sophism and proceeds by a method involving much practical result and rational evidence. For instance; if there were an *appearance* of fire, doubted, as to its being more than a *mere* appearance of it;—the moment it were known to have been elicited from the concussion of flint and steel, there would no longer be a doubt on that

matter. Then if in any case did the question arise, whether those objects usually considered as *flint and steel*, were truly such, it would be thought a proof in the affirmative, if upon their concussion they could elicit a *sensible* spark. Philosophers might imagine the *secret powers* of the *whole* to be altered; but plain understandings would consider the *entire coincidence* to be too great and remarkable to arise from *chance*. Such *sensible causes*, giving birth to such *sensible effects*, they would suppose formed a connection of the highest probability, whence to form a judgment, that the whole secret powers of each were similar. And in cases of high probability the mind is as much *determined* to action, as by demonstration. It cannot stand hesitating, and therefore “takes a step,” (in arguing from the sensible qualities to the future effects of things,) governed by a *high probability* founded on REASONING “that *they ARE*” connected with like secret powers, on which the *Effects entirely depend*.

Nor is this argument in a circle, for the mind does not reason from the Effects to

the Causes; and from the Causes back again to the Effects, but considers in each of these cases, that the *invariable regularity* of nature is a POWER that may be depended upon; and from which fact of *invariableness* the reasonable argument is framed, that the same secret powers will accompany the sensible qualities which have ever done so, when elicited from like *apparent Causes*. It is an additional proof added to the APPEARANCE of *fire*, that it is REALLY such, if found to be the result not only of *apparently* like Causes in action, but of such that have *never been known to MISS FIRE*, when they have *seemed* to kindle it. Whilst should the temper of steel lie under any suspicion, of incapacity as to the determination of its Effects; if upon trial, the spark be immediately emitted, the conclusion is as immediate that this Effect is similar in the secret powers, which nature in no instance ever failed, to determine along with such sensible qualities.

In moral feelings also, I might argue that had I a friend whose absence might suggest a dread, lest the *powers* of his

friendship had become weakened ; if upon his return I observed the same *sensible manifestations* of regard as heretofore I should have very reasonable ground to judge, that they were the symptoms of a *heart*, as true to me as ever, whose faith was always found to shew itself *in similar demonstrations of kindness*.

It is one of the most ordinary modes of reasoning that the generality of mankind possess ; to consider invariability of recurrence as incapable of arising from *chance*.—The meaning of which is, that having the principle of general causation already in their minds, they judge that invariable regularity cannot be *undesigned* and without an end in view, (as well as that it is itself an *Effect*, and must therefore have its own Cause, i. e. a *regular* invariable Cause of whose very *essence* it is, only to determine similar Effects.) And it is remarkable that this idea and in the *very same language* expressing it, is used at the beginning of Mr. Hume's "*Treatise*," as the sole foundation of a system expressly undertaken to prove that the

mind never *reasons*, from experience to expectation. His words are to this purpose ; “ *this coincidence*,” (viz. of an IDEA always requiring an IMPRESSION to prevent it,) “ IS TOO GREAT TO ARISE FROM CHANCE !”

To return to Mr. Locke, he merely meant to say, that nature in her regular and usual modes of operation, from Cause and Effect might form *irregular collections of qualities*, not to be detected by mere appearances; and therefore unworthy *on that account only*, of retaining the *names* of regular species, which are *also named* on account of their *tried* Effects and properties. But every man acquainted with Mr. Locke’s writings must consider him, as far from wishing to authorize in future times such a scheme as that of Mr. Hume’s. Nor do I think he would dissent from my notions, that the method the mind takes to judge of the kind of objects which are present is :

1stly.—By tracing the *manner* of their formation.

2dly.—By considering an invariable regularity in nature as reasonable to be depended upon, being itself an invariable effect from an equal Cause.

3dly.—By the application of various senses to the affections of the particles.

4thly.—By the consideration that the sensible qualities being similar is a presumption in favor of similar secret powers, as *truly* similar objects would necessarily *appear* the same.

5thly.—That in like manner when *Effects* are *apparently* similar a presumption is formed in favor of apparently similar causes, having given birth to *like secret powers* in the EFFECTS, as well as *their sensible qualities*.

6thly.—That the mind quickly and habitually surveys these things; so that the understanding being *accomplished* in such latent, and constant reasoning; may uniformly blend and use it, although it may find a difficulty of analyzing it when called for.

7thly.—That after the application of an exact experiment, it is impossible to imagine a difference of qualities to arise under the same circumstances.

It is strange that a system at once so unstable and confused, as Mr. Hume's, should ever have been built upon any notions of Mr. Locke, whose moral conclusions are so much at variance with his. Divest Mr. Hume's ideas of the air, of science and grace, which he throws around them, and present them in a plain and popular manner, they will appear thus.—“The mind cannot become acquainted with the knowledge of a necessary connexion between Cause and Effect; for there exists no relations amidst things, of which an *idea* can be conveyed to it, except by the means of an original *impression*.”

“But in nature events are entirely *unconnected*, therefore not capable of conveying an *impression* of *necessary connexion*, or of *POWER*; yet men conceive that events, are *not thus unconnected*—in which idea they are mistaken; as *experience*, which is

the ONLY field for their observation in this matter, merely offers to view certain similar sensible qualities, which are *frequently*, although not *invariably* followed by other similar sensible qualities. In certain cases, however, there have been such *invariable* sequences (though “of *loose, casual, unconnected events*”) that a definition of Cause and Effect, as of an *invariable* sequence, may be *framed thereon*.”

“In as much as it is only like sensible qualities with which we are acquainted, so they alone are considered as like *Causes* or *antecedents*; and they have *no connexion* with the *secret powers of objects*,—which secret powers, are *nevertheless the only true Causes* on “*which the Effects entirely depend*;—therefore *like* sensible qualities not being like Causes might be followed by *different Effects*.”

“Hence the *Custom* of the observance of those sequences of sensible qualities, which are similar, can alone convey the *impression*, whence the *idea* of causation results; and thence *necessary connexion* is a

“fancy of the mind,” not a relation in nature.”

“To prove that *Custom* is the only “Cause” of our *belief in causation*; it is perfectly *reasonable* to suppose, that such an *invariable sequence might be interrupted*, for there is no contradiction in imagining an “ARBITRARY” *change in the course of nature*. Yet should a contrary *imagination* resist *reason*, and not conceive *in fact* this interruption as possible to take place; she may again *reconsider* the possibility of nature altering her course, forming no contradiction to *reason*.”

I appeal to those who are acquainted with Mr. Hume’s Essays, if this statement be not the sum of the argument—and I also appeal to every man capable of logical accuracy, if it doth not involve every species of illogical sophistry; for,

1st.—There is drawn a general negative conclusion; from an examination of particular instances only. If the adversary may not draw from particular experience

the general affirmative conclusion, that *there is a necessary connexion*; neither can Mr. Hume infer a general negative position, that there is *not a necessary connexion* between Cause and Effect. He also deduces a general affirmative conclusion, viz. "*that the future shall invariably resemble the past*; from *particular* instances only*.

2dly.—The mind is directed to infer a conclusion against the general relation of Cause and Effect, by the demonstration of a proposition in nowise inconsistent with it; namely, that *like* sensible qualities, NOT being *like* Causes, might be followed by DIFFERENT Effects†.

3dly.—A general negative conclusion is in fact drawn from negative premises, merely;—(however the illogical method may be disguised both as to manner and diction), for it is concluded there is no proof for the existence of the general rela-

* See p. 66, of this Essay.

† See p. 76, *ibid.*

tion of Cause and Effect between objects;—because experience shows that like sensible qualities are *not* like Causes; and are therefore *not* necessarily connected with like Effects*!

4thly.—The question is *shifted* from the examination of the general relation of Cause and Effect, to that of the criterion for ascertaining the presence of like Causes†.

5thly.—The very proposition is admitted, which is in dispute; in order to serve the purpose of his argument;—first, in the statement that *impressions are the productive Causes of ideas*;—secondly, in supposing the secret powers of an object

* It may be seen, that on account of these *particular* and *negative* propositions, (which after all include *that proposition which is in question*) he *really* deduces *there is no such existence, in this relation* AMIDST THINGS—for in the place of the *reality of its existence in nature*, (supposed by their statement to be disproved to reason, and therefore disproved altogether) a “*fancy of it in the mind alone*” is obliged to be substituted in its stead. This “FANCY” is *no connexion* between objects.

† See further, p. 60, and 62, of this Essay.

to be alone *the real productive Causes of its future properties*;—thirdly, *in* conceiving Nature may alter her course for the express purpose of changing the secret powers; *and that they are changed by such alteration*;—and lastly, in alleging *custom to be the sole Cause* (i. e. producing generating principle) *of the IDEA of causation**.†

6thly.—The proposition that the course of nature may be supposed to change," is used *ambiguously*, signifying indifferently either an uncaused alteration of the SUBSEQUENT *sensible qualities* or of the ANTECEDENT *secret powers*‡.

7thly, and lastly.—The two chief propositions of the argument are in opposition to each other; for Mr. Hume attempts to establish, *that CUSTOM not reason is the prin-*

* In these several instances it cannot be contended that Mr. Hume's idea of Cause, is only that of an antecedent; IMPRESSION is supposed not merely *to go before*, but to *create* IDEA; i. e. to be an object absolutely necessary and completely efficient to its production, &c.

† See pages 76, 90, and 146, &c. of this Essay.

‡ See p. 73, *ibid.*

cipal of causation, whilst he allows REASON to be the sole ground and necessary Cause of this belief.

In presenting the foregoing observations to the reader's attention, I have endeavoured, I hope, without presumption, to show that Mr. Hume's reputation for logical correctness has been overrated. The effect of his work is to astonish by its boldness and novelty ;—to allure us by its grace and lightness ; his propositions are arranged so artfully, that their illogical connexion is not perceived, and the understanding, without being satisfied, is gradually drawn into inferences from which it would *gladly* but cannot *readily* escape.

If any reader should agree with me in conceiving this scheme to be fallacious, when minutely analyzed, and is thereby enabled to overcome its influence on his mind, I shall consider myself more than repaid for the labour of thought spent in an endeavour towards so desirable an end.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

OBSERVATIONS ON DR. BROWN'S ESSAY ON THE
DOCTRINE OF MR. HUME.

DR. Brown's theory merits a particular investigation, and I shall follow him very shortly through each observation he makes on Mr. Hume's doctrine, which he states in *five* propositions. He first of all begins however with his own definition of the relation of Cause and Effect; which does not differ materially from that of Mr. Hume; and has the same inconvenience attending it; viz. *that it will apply to other regular sequences, than those which belong to this relation.* "A cause," says he, "is
"an object, which immediately precedes
"any change, and which existing again in
"similar circumstances, will always be im-
"mediately followed by a similar change."

And again, "invariableness of antecedence, is the element which constitutes
"the idea of a cause."

But I ask, how do you get acquainted with this fact? Mr. Hume says he knows it; "because of the habit arising from past custom, carrying the thought to an expectation of the future, with a liveliness of conception equal to the experience of the past," i. e. there is *uncertain certainty*; for, a lively idea hath not, in a *waking* any more than in a *sleeping* hour, CERTAIN EXISTENCE for its resemblance, without some *other notion* than merely its vivacity to support an *argument for its reality**.

Dr. Brown says, "I know it *from instinctive belief*, arising from the observation of seeing in *any one instance*, certain Effects follow given Causes."

Now I confess, I do not know what "*instinctive belief*" means, except as applied to the mysterious manner in which animals know of the qualities of bodies previous to experience, by some laws be-

* This notion is intended to be fully discussed in a future Essay on the nature of external objects.

yond our scrutiny; or at most our conscious belief, of the existence of a simple sensation.

Intuitive belief, I understand; and by it is meant,—that in the relation of the two members of a proposition, the truth is contained in the definition of the terms; and cannot be altered without altering the signs of the ideas, which have been just allowed to stand for them.—But to say that *instinctive*, or *intuitive* belief, can arise in the mind, as a *conclusive proposition*, when it requires *experience*, in order to form some DATA for its *premises*; is to say you believe a thing, without a *reason* for it, and that you are sure of it, because you are sure of it, *although you do want an experiment*, in order to form a *basis for the proposition*, which is to be a *reason* for your *instinctive* conclusion. This is Dr. Brown's Theory.

He is excellent in detecting some of Mr. Hume's fallacies; but in not allowing that the proposition, "like Causes must have like Effects," to be founded on *reason*,

is equally guilty of a most important one himself.

The first proposition of Mr. Hume which he examines is, that the relation of Cause and Effect cannot be discovered *a priori*.

To this Dr. Brown assents ; and I grant, that the particular qualities which will arise, under new circumstances that bodies shall be placed in, cannot. But the exact nature of the question is here rendered very ambiguous : for the *general* relation of Cause and Effect, is the subject *in question* ; but the *question answered*, is whether the *particular* Effects arising from *particular* Causes, can be known ; and in *which-ever way* it is answered, *it does not form an answer* to the GENERAL one ;—for, like Causes in general, might *necessarily be connected* with *like Effects* (of whatever kind they might be) ; and this proposition known, from some *process of reasoning* ; although neither *before* nor *after* experience, the *particular* kind of Effects from given Causes should be discovered. This ambiguity

renders the argument nugatory, and it would be tedious and unnecessary to say any thing more upon it.

The second proposition of Mr. Hume's Theory is, that even "after experience the relation of Cause and Effect cannot be discovered by reason." To this Dr. Brown also agrees. The same ambiguity, concerning the nature of the question again prevails; for *reason might be* able to teach us after experience, that the *same* qualities must arise out of the *same* objects, *when there was nothing to make a difference*, although she should not inform us of the "secrets of nature," and explain to us any better, the mode of the connexion in each particular instance; for if the contrary were true;—if we could know those "secrets" in every particular instance, it could not form a ground, for concluding that "*all* like Causes must have like Effects."—*General conclusions* cannot flow from *particular* premises, whether they be formed by *reason*, or *custom*, or *instinct*.

But Dr. Brown's argument, *against reason*, must be examined more minutely; these are his words; "he who asserts that "A WILL always be *followed* by B, asserts "more than that A always HAS BEEN *followed* by B; and it is *this addition* which "forms the *very essence* of THE RELATION "OF CAUSE AND EFFECT; neither of the "propositions *includes* the other; and as "they have no agreement, *reason*, which "is the sense of agreement, *cannot be applied to them.*"

To represent the relation of Cause and Effect, as A *followed* by B, is a *false view* of the matter. Cause and Effect, might be represented rather by $A \times B = C$, therefore C *is INCLUDED in the MIXTURE OF THE OBJECTS* called CAUSE. If C arises once from the *junction of any two bodies*; C must upon every other *like conjunction*, be the *result*; because there is *no alteration in the proportions of the quantities to make a difference*; —C is really *included* in the MIXTURE of A and B, although, to our senses, we are forced to *note down* (as it were) the SUM arising from their union, *after the observance*

of their coalescence. In like manner the results of all arithmetical combinations are *included* in their statements; yet we are obliged to take notice of them separately and subsequently, owing to the imperfection of our senses, in not observing them with sufficient quickness, and *time* being requisite to bring them out to full view and *apparent* in some DISTINCT *shape*. Indeed my whole notion, of the relation of Cause and Effect, is aptly imagined, by the nature of the necessary results, included in the juxta-position of quantities.

But as long as Cause shall be considered ONLY *as an antecedent*; the FUTURE can never be proved to be *included in the PAST*, which yet is truly the case.—For when it comes to be observed, that *Cause means, and really is the creation of NEW QUALITIES*, (from new conjunctions in matter or mind,) then it is perceived that the future is “involved in the past;” for when existing objects *are the same*, they must put on SIMILAR QUALITIES; otherwise *contrary qualities or differences*, would arise of themselves; and “begin

their own existences," which is *impossible*, and *conveys a contradiction in terms**. All that *experience* has to do, is to show us, by what passes within ourselves, that there is a *contradiction* in the supposition of *qualities beginning their own existences*; and A CONTRADICTION is never admitted in the *relation of any ideas* that present themselves. The very act of reasoning consists, in such a comparison of our ideas, as will not permit of *inconsistent propositions*†; which would be the case, if "like Causes could produce *other* than like Effects."

So then REASON does establish this beautiful and certain proposition, which

* No mathematical reasoning can ever be driven further back, than by showing that the *contrary* of an asserted proposition is a *contradiction in terms*.

† The beginning of every quality is perceived to be only a *change*, upon some objects already in existence; and therefore cannot convey the same notion to the mind, as the *beginning of a quality*, supposed to be *independent of other objects* and NOT to be a change. THE BEGINNING OF EXISTENCE, therefore, cannot appear otherwise than *contrary* to the idea of its *independency* of those objects of which it is a *change*.

is the foundation of all our knowledge ;—
That like Causes must ever produce like Effects.

The third proposition is ;—that the relation of Cause and Effect is an object of *belief* alone. To this Dr. Brown also agrees, saying, “ any quality which is incapable of being *perceived*, or *inferred*, can result only from an *instinctive principle of faith*.” But I ask how do you know the *future* is invariable? You say from an instinctive principle of faith in observing the *present*. I reply, that it is as impossible to draw an *INSTINCTIVE general conclusion*, from *particular premises*, as a *REASONABLE* one. That A follows B, can no more form an *instinct* than a *reason*, for universal certainty of a similar sequence.

The fourth proposition, that the relation of Cause and Effect is believed to exist between objects only after their “ *customary*” conjunction is known to us ; Dr. Brown combats with such ingenuity, reasons against with such severity of logic, and

vanquishes with such skill and power, that all I should attempt to say upon it, would be useless. I can only express my regret, that he could suppose, a notion of *belief*, founded upon the influence of the imagination, rather than of *reason*, to be a *rock*, on which we might build our house, without “*danger of the storm and tempest.*”

Nor is Dr. Brown’s “*blind impulse of faith*” a much more secure one. He imagines such a principle to be the foundation of all demonstrative reasoning;—but it is really not so. *Intuitive* propositions are those *included in the very terms*, given to our impressions; and are as true as *they* are, whose truth arises from *simple conscious feelings*, ARBITRARILY named. But INSTINCTIVE propositions, *not so grounded*, and which require some DATA, some *experience*, some *premises*, in which it is confessed they are *not included*, are an absolute contradiction to philosophy and common sense.

The fifth proposition is, "that when two objects have been frequently observed in succession, the mind passes readily from the idea of one to the idea of the other; the transition in the mind itself being the impression from which the idea of the necessary connexion of the objects as Cause and Effect is derived."

This opinion, namely, "*that an easy transition of thought,*" is the only foundation of the idea of power, Dr. Brown also combats, and conquers; showing in a masterly manner the *illogical* circle in which Mr. Hume argues.—Indeed it is matter of surprise to reflect on Mr. Hume's reputation, *for logical* precision; when the whole superstructure of his work is built upon the denial of a proposition, which is *assumed as true in the premises*; for in the original inquiry, concerning the method by which we gain *ideas*; Mr. Hume says, it must be from *impressions as their Causes*; i. e. as a "productive principle;" for "their constant conjunction is too frequent to arise

“from chance*,” then examining the nature of the idea of cause, or power; he asks, “from what impression (as its cause) this idea arises” (as its effect)? Thus proving ideas to be “derived” from *impressions*, on account of the *necessary connexion* there exists between them; and then, *disproving* this doctrine of *necessary connexion*, from the *very* notions previously built upon it. It is considered, however, by Dr. Brown, that Mr. Hume’s idea of power, although *false*, and only resolvable into a *strong imagination* founded on custom; “a belief not different from that we have in fiction, save

* “Let us consider how they stand with regard to existence, and of the impressions and ideas, which are Causes and which Effects.” TREATISE.—“Such a constant conjunction can never arise from chance, but proves a dependence of the impressions on the ideas, or of the ideas on the impressions.” TREATISE.—These notions, although not expressed in the *very same words*, are *plainly* found in the Essays. “Every idea is *copied*,” or is *derived* from an impression, is precisely the same thought, and which as completely begs the question in dispute, as the passages do which I have quoted from the Treatise; evidently arguing that IMPRESSION is the “productive principle” of idea.

in the vivacity of the conception of its objects ;" is nevertheless sufficient to guard the doctrine from any charge of excluding the necessity of *Deity for the creation of the universe*.

He seems to think, that as Mr. Hume got hold of the idea of POWER, by *some means or other*, it is immaterial by what means; as any idea of power whatever, would show that a Deity was alike necessary.

But this is false reasoning; if, according to Mr. Hume, we really did, from observing one object always follow another, fall into so strong a fancy, that one was *necessary to produce the other*, as to be unable to avoid the conclusion of their invariable and absolute dependence on each other; yet upon the supposition of once knowing this conclusion to be only the effect of a habit of mind, arising from an association of ideas; (a fancy, a custom of thought); we should nevertheless consider that the objects in nature might be perfectly inde-

pendent of each other ; and therefore could not draw any conclusion in favour of the necessity of a Creator, as the “ productive principle ” of the universe.

For should the circumstance of B, following A, in all alphabets, generate in our minds the false notion that A *causes* B, yet if afterwards we should discover that these letters were not *truly necessary* to each other, and that in nature *any other letter* than B might *follow* A ; although after such discovery, B might always be *suggested* on the *appearance* of A ; yet not only would the notion of *causation* be really destroyed, if it arose from the *invariableness of their antecedence and subsequence* ; but upon the supposition of the contrary, and that notwithstanding the conviction of the judgment, the *fancy of their mutual necessary dependence held its ground* ; still we should not justify such an example as fit to be followed in *ALL our other expectations* ; or thence conclude, that *all things we know of*, required necessarily their *antecedents*. No ;—this *fancy*

of power, without knowledge of it; this imagination of productive principle, without an enlightened judgment concerning its absolute necessity, cannot be all that is necessary, to any arguments that are founded on the belief of Power."

A false and fanciful idea of power, of cause, and of connexion, is just as unsubstantial for their support, as though these words were absolutely "without any meaning."

The denial of the idea of power, as of truly a "productive principle," as of a *former and generator of new qualities in matter*, and the consideration of it as only "a custom of mind," does not prevent the doctrine, as Dr. Brown seems to think it may, from involving the most dangerous consequences.

How such an idea of power as Mr. Hume's, should give us the "consolation, and the peace, and the happiness, and the virtue of a filial confidence in the great

Father of mankind," is hard to discover?
A faith like this, would not go far in af-
fording men that "security which has more
to do with our happiness, than any present
earthly enjoyment!"

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

OBSERVATIONS ON MR. LAWRENCK'S LECTURES.

SECTION THE FIRST.

I SHALL now proceed to offer a few observations on a modern author, (Mr. Lawrence,) who in his *Physiological Lectures*, eagerly seizes upon Dr. Brown's definition of the relation of Cause and Effect; which he imagines well adapted to an explanation of the properties of life.

In his 3d Lecture, p. 81, Mr. Lawrence says, " we can only trace, in this notion of
 " necessary connexion, the fact of certainty
 " or universality of concurrence; therefore
 " it is we may assert the living muscular
 " fibre is irritable, and the living nervous
 " fibre is sensible. Nothing more than this
 " is meant when a necessary connexion is
 " asserted between the properties of sensi-

“ bility, and irritability, and the structures
“ of living muscular and nervous fibres.”

And again, page 79, “ The only reason
“ we have for asserting in any case that
“ any property belongs to any substance,
“ is the certainty or universality with which
“ we find the substance, and the property
“ in question, accompanying each other.—
“ Thus we say gold is ductile, yellow, solu-
“ ble in nitro-muriatic acid, because we
“ have always found gold when pure to be
“ so—we assert the living muscular fibres
“ to be irritable, and the living nervous
“ fibres to be sensible for the same reason.
“ The evidence of the two propositions
“ presents itself to my mind as unmarked
“ by the faintest shade of difference.” Ac-
cording to the theory of the foregoing pages
of this Essay, there is the greatest difference
between the evidence of the two proposi-
tions just quoted.

An object is here defined; “ a com-
bined mass of qualities, determined to
the senses from unknown causes in nature,
to which an arbitrary name is affixed.” But

property which is synonymous with Effect, "is the yet *untried*, or *unobserved* quality, which *will* arise upon the mixture of that *mass* with other objects."

The *necessary connexion*, therefore, of a *name*, with the *qualities which it designates*, is no more than the connexion of an *arbitrary sound* with an *object*, or in other words with the *unknown causes in nature*, which determine the qualities that affect our senses; and which must be "necessarily connected with it" so long as we do not contradict ourselves in terms; or at least whilst we agree not to alter our terms. But the *necessary connexion* of an *object*, and its further *properties*, (or effects,) viz. those which are produced by its union with another object, arises from the obligation that certain combinations of qualities have to beget upon their *junction* with other combinations, certain NEW QUALITIES; and this *necessary connexion* must take place between the like objects on all future occasions, from the obligation that *like Causes have to produce like Effects*. The connexion

of gold with fusibility, ductility, &c. is of the former kind of connexion, viz: that of a *name* for certain enumerated *qualities*, *en masse* *.—The connexion of sentiency with the *live* nerve, is of the latter kind. The former is a *necessary* but *arbitrary* connexion; the latter is considered as a *NECESSARY Effect*, from certain combined and efficient *causes*.

SECTION THE SECOND.

Should it be objected, the word *gold*, does not stand as a mere *arbitrary* sign for *certain enumerated qualities*, but as a *term*, for a *portion of extended matter*, which will exhibit upon trial, *certain properties peculiar to itself*, I admit, that it is perfectly philosophical to consider the subject in this point of view; for either a *noun* as a *name*, may be considered as a sign, for *all* the qualities and properties understood to be under the term;—or as a sign, merely standing for

* See Locke's Essay on Human Understanding, Chap. 3. b. 6. Sec. 35.

the qualities of the genus ;—then the noun is still only necessarily connected in the sense of an *arbitrary* connexion, *with the qualities which compose the genus*,—and the *mass of qualities*, which combine to form this *object*, are afterwards necessarily connected as a *Cause* ; when in its conjunction, with any other objects ; it puts on further qualities, which then are its *effects*, or *properties*. In this sense, *gold*, mixed with light, (some of whose rays it reflects,) is necessarily yellow ; mixed with heat, (in different degrees,) it is ductile, and fusible ; mixed with N. M. acid, it is soluble.

If this should be the sense, which I do not think it is, of Mr. Lawrence in his passage on gold—it is true there may be “ no difference between the evidence for the two propositions ;” for both objects are *necessarily* and *invariably* connected with their effects or properties.

But neither of them are to be regarded, as *only* so connected with their properties

in future, because they have been invariably concurrent in past time.

Mr. Lawrence, no more than Dr. Brown, or Mr. Hume, can predicate of *the FUTURE*, from *the past*, unless under the relation of Cause and Effect, as of a truly *productive principle, with a quality produced.*

I would further observe, that the arbitrary connexion of a name, with a certain number of similar enumerated qualities, requires no proof for its assertion; such qualities shall be gold, and such others lead and copper, if we please to call them so. But the necessary connexion of an object and its further *properties*, when combined with other objects, requires *experiment to prove its truth.*

Also the *definition* of the arbitrary name, is *absolute*.—Because the proposition in which it is contained is identical; such qualities, are gold—and gold is the enumeration of such qualities. But the definition of an object in respect to its exhibition of *further qualities in different combi-*

nations with other objects, is conditional; it being understood that it will not hold, unless the circumstances are similar upon each occasion, that have any power to affect them.*

SECTION THE THIRD.

It is plain that Mr. Lawrence has overlooked these distinctions, where there are such manifest differences, on account of his "becoming acquainted with Dr. Brown's Essay on Cause and Effect," which he considers as "so simple and logical that any attempt at direct opposition would be utterly hopeless;" and has quoted a long passage in a note as a proof of this, and at a support of the doctrine he is laying down in the text.

In this passage are the three following sentences, which I shall not apologize for inserting; since the consequences of a hasty adoption, of what I consider FALSE *instead of* LOGICAL deduction, and confused

* See Locke's Essay, Chap. 6. Book 4. Sec. 8 and 9; where unexpectedly I find he perfectly coincides with me.

instead of "simple" argument into important practical theories, cannot be too strongly deprecated, and I wish to give my reader full possession of the grounds of my reasoning.

The 1st consists in the definition of the relation of Cause and Effect, which I have already commented on, in the former Chapter against Dr. Brown.

"A cause is that which immediately precedes any change, and which existing at any time in similar circumstances, has been always, and will be always followed by a similar change."

"Priority, in the sequence observed and invariableness of antecedence in the past and future sequences supposed, are the only elements combined in the notion of a cause."

2dly. Of property, "the words property and quality admit of exactly the same definition, expressing only a certain relation of invariable antecedence and conse-

“ quence in changes that take place on the
 “ presence of the substance to which they
 “ are ascribed.”

3dly. “ The powers, properties or qua-
 “ lities of a substance are not to be re-
 “ garded as any thing superadded to the
 “ substance, or distinct from it. They are
 “ *only* the substance itself considered in re-
 “ lation to various changes that take place
 “ when it exists in peculiar circumstances.”

Hence Mr. Lawrence concludes, p. 81,
 “ That although induced to ascribe the
 “ constant concomitance of a substance
 “ and its properties to *some necessary con-*
 “ *nexion* between them, yet we can only
 “ trace in this notion, the fact of cer-
 “ tainty or universality of concurrence.
 “ *Nothing more* than this can be meant
 “ when a *necessary connexion* is asserted
 “ between the properties of sensibility, and
 “ irritability, and the structures of living
 “ muscular and nervous fibres.”

Now I must shortly bring to my readers
 recollection, that I have already shown that

Dr. Brown's definition which predicates *invariableness* in relation to *future* sequences, is not supported by his argument, as no *past* experience *merely*, could prove it ;—it being *illogical* to draw general conclusions from particular premises.—I have also, I think, shown that our knowledge of the *future*, arises from its being “*involved*” in the past ; on account of *Cause being truly a productive principle*, and *Effects or properties truly produced* qualities, so that necessary connexion becomes a very different relation from either a *past or future sequence* of events, and signifies the “close bond” between the creator and created.

Had Mr. Lawrence, however, paid more attention than he has done to the *concluding* sentence I have quoted from Dr. Brown, he had not engrafted these errors into his system :—for nothing can be more just and beautiful than to say of the properties of a substance, “that they are only “the *substance itself* in relation to *various “changes which take place, when it exists “in peculiar circumstances.”*—But such an

idea is at variance with all his own previous definitions and arguments on the subject, for if “ the powers, properties, or qualities “ of a substance are not to be regarded as “ any thing superadded to the substance, “ or distinct from it, but only the substance “ itself, considered in relation to various “ changes which take place when it exists “ in peculiar circumstances,” then these properties and qualities cannot be *after* itself; but are *necessarily* connected *with*, because *inhering* in it, and brought out to view when *mixed* with the qualities of *other objects*.

SECTION THE FOURTH.

Now as the muscle and nerve can and do exist as organized beings, without irritability and sentiency when under death, so when as substances, they are placed under that condition called *life*, and are then only capable of putting on these qualities of irritability and sentiency, it must be by a *truly necessary connexion*, between life and these qualities. Irritability and sentiency are verily new powers and beings *created* by efficient, *creating* circumstances. *Sen-*

sation and all its variety, is not an effect without a cause; and *life* is that object without which it will not exist in the *nerve*; and therefore according to the doctrine laid down in this Essay, is a true cause for it: being *one* of the objects *absolutely necessary* and efficient to *that* result in *certain circumstances*:—although what the *WHOLE* of those conditions may be, the *combination* of which is needful, may possibly ever remain beyond the scrutiny of man. Should Mr. Lawrence retort, that the phrase “the living nerve,” stands *merely* as a *sign* of enumerated *qualities* and properties found together, in the way that I have said *gold* may stand as a *sign* for those that lie under that term; that it is in this sense he compares the two propositions concerning them; and in this sense, he alleges there is no difference in the evidence for the *only kind* of necessary connexion there exists between an *object* and its properties?

I answer the very statement of the proposition “the *living nerve* is *sentient*,” assigns a *cause* and *producing principle* for sensation; for by placing an adjective before

a noun, it becomes a *qualified noun*. And the qualities beneath the whole term are a mass of *altered* qualities, which alteration, is alleged to be *efficient* to the production of a new mode of existence; viz. that of sensation.

Thus (to use a familiar illustration) the saying a *bilious* man is *choleric*, assigns *vile* as the *cause* of anger, and it would be puerile after such a proposition, to add, that “however strong the feeling may be, that there is the close bond of Cause and Effect between these objects, yet it is a mistake to suppose it.” This would but be a subsequent denial of *what the statement previously asserted*.

Whereas *gold*, or any other noun, when it stands as a sign for any collection of qualities, and properties; is neither a cause nor an object; it is a word, a *name* merely, and when thus placed as the subject of a proposition, of which the qualities stand as the predicate, signifies, that by such a name, shall such masses, being found to-

gether and set apart from other collections, be signified*.

This distinction between a *qualified*, and *unqualified* noun, on account of the different *nature* of the *connexion* of the predicate of the proposition, with its subject, Mr. Lawrence did not take notice of; or he would not have thought "there was not the faintest shade of difference" between the two propositions he states, in this respect.

SECTION THE FIFTH.

But this is not the most important error in Mr. Lawrence's system, arising from false notions, concerning the relation of Cause and Effect; for by a strange sort of contradiction, in philosophy, although he denies that *any cause* can be found, among those things which are invariably together, for the properties they exhibit; yet he makes no difficulty in inferring that the *whole causes* are supposed to be found

* See Locke's Essay in several places, especially Book 3. Chap. 8. Sec. 2. compared with Chap. 9. Sec. 12, 13, and 17. and Chap. 10. Sec. 20, 21, and 22.

from the mere circumstance of their invariable coalescence; insomuch that *no extraneous* cause need be sought for.—The sum of his argument is, “*There is no such thing as CAUSE and EFFECT, to be perceived between the objects with which we are acquainted. It is idle to say we have found a Cause; it is still more idle to look for it.—Objects are found to be amassed qualities and properties, which have invariably existed together in past time, and for that reason will do so in future; but as for a productive principle, it is unworthy of a philosopher to expect it, or to seek for it; or to need it, in order to account for any appearances. We have objects, variously diversified—this is all and this is enough!*”

It is hence, (so Mr. Lawrence argues,) absurd to seek a Cause for sensation or thought, although no efficient one is pretended to be assigned, in the union of the powers of life with organization. The living nerve is an object having sensation—“*this is all and this is enough.*”—Whereas there must be causes for every thing, and sometimes *a vast multitude of objects are*

wanted, before their *mutual bearings* and *mixtures* with each other operate so as to *produce* any peculiar existence. The highest, and the greatest we know of is, *sensation, and its varieties*; and although we know that life is *wanted* as a *cause* without which it cannot exist in *this world in the nervous system*; yet we have no notion of *all* the objects that may be necessary to its creation.

Of all philosophical errors, the substitution of false, partial, or insufficient causes for the production of an end or object, is the most dangerous, because so liable to escape detection; and the idleness of the mind which prosecutes with reluctance difficult researches into remote proofs; its impatience which eagerly grasps at the readiest solution of a doubt; and its pride, so prone to triumph indiscreetly at the glimpse of a discovery supposed to be complete; for ever occasion it to be guilty of that mode of sophistry scholastically termed *non causa—pro causa*.

And this is *truly* the amount of Mr. Lawrence's error—for with all his denial that there are such things as *cause* and *necessary connexion*, he virtually assigns a "*false cause*" for sensation, because he asserts that *all* is found that is *necessary* in order to it*.

Now the truth is, that nature affords not experiment, or data enough to show, what are the *whole* causes necessary; i. e. *all* the objects required, whose *junction* is necessary to *sentientcy as the result*.—For as the words *life*, and *nerve*, stand only for a few sensible qualities, whereby they affect us; so does it appear there is no existing definition of them, no possible experiment which can be made on their nature, sufficient to afford premises wide enough to admit the conclusion, that sentientcy shall result from their conjunction only, and shall not be able to exist without them.

* Mr. Lawrence says, there is no more reason to search for a cause for sensation or life—than for attraction or electricity—yet these powers must have Causes, and philosophers have searched for them; and if they have given over the inquiry, it is because they despair of success.

SECTION THE SEVENTH.

If indeed the powers of matter in general, (whatever matter may be,) were sufficient to elicit sentiency when placed under *arrangement* and mixed with life, then the true causes for it are assigned, and found. But we cannot *prove* this. If on the contrary, the essential qualities of matter arranged and in motion be not thought sufficient to account for so extraordinary a difference as that between conscious and unconscious being, then there must be a *particular* cause for it: which cause must be considered an immaterial cause, that is, a *principle, power, being*, an unknown quality *denied* to exist in matter.—This must have a name, and may be called *soul*, or *spirit*. And this statement, really contains the whole argument either way. It is on this point, that not only *here*, but in an after Lecture (“on the functions of the brain,”) Mr. Lawrence betrays a want of philosophical precision, by denying that any cause beyond the brain is necessary to thought, on account of the impossibility of assigning the *time* of its union with the

body; whereas a Cause must have originally been necessary, upon the creation of man, for the phenomenon in question; and the capacity of sensation may, as a component part of the whole animal mass, be always generated with it, yet retain its individuality, after having once been formed with each being;—analogous to the whole plan of nature, in other respects;—analogous to the physical individuality of all the millions of mankind, each of which was formed of the general clay;—analogous to the separate, and particular properties, which wait upon the differences of vegetable life, where every various plant is expanded from similar juices.

But I must be true to my own doctrine in all its bearings; and as I have said, that in order to form the *proximate cause* of any event, a *junction or mutual mixture of all the objects necessary to it must take place*; so I conceive it to be impossible, but that a *distinct and different* action of the brain (without which organ there is no sensation in man, and all thought is but a mode of it) must be *synchronous* with whatever other

powers are also necessary for that result ; viz. sensation and thought with their varieties. I say, the junction must be *synchronous*—for sensation is an *effect*, and must require the union of those objects whose mixed qualities elicit it.

Now those causes *not* contained in matter, may be called mind, or soul. I have said also, that a different action of brain is wanted for *each variety of thought and sensation* ; and so it must, because there must be a *separate* or different cause, for every *separate or diverse* Effect in nature, as before discussed. And thus the brain becomes the *exponent of the soul* ; or is *in the same proportion in its actions*, as the actions of mind : and thus what is termed *association of ideas*, must have *corresponding unions*, in the actions of the brain.

Now Mr. Lawrence contradicts at once his own arguments for materialism, as well as nature, and fact ; when he says (tauntingly) “ thus we come to diseases of “ an immaterial being ! for which suitably

“ enough *moral* treatment has been recommended,” inferring thereby the *absurdity of moral treatment*, to a *material mind*.

Now moral treatment, according to his *own notion* of *only a material capacity* for thought, might still be proper, as it would still act on that *material capacity for thought*,—and though “ arguments, syllogisms, and sermons,” might not reach it, of an *ordinary kind*; yet, the persuasions of friendship; the influence of beauty, and of love; the pleasures of social intercourse; the calm discussions of reason; scenes that please the imagination, or enchant the sense, will reach it, and do. Nevertheless all this is “ *moral treatment*,” and which yet requires the brain and nervous system. In short, to address the mind is to address the body, which *instantly* acts along and with it, not *after* it. And to address the body is to address the mind—for *every sensation*, however popularly called *bodily*; requires *mind*, equally with thought as a cause for it, and is not merely to be considered as a simple being, or feeling, beginning and ending in itself; but as inti-

mately associating with those of a LIKE KIND, which certain THOUGHTS are capable of exciting, and as having, therefore, a most material agency, when first in order, by suggesting such specific thoughts.—This mode of thinking on the subject I know not that any have sufficiently heeded, much less cultivated.

It is to be lamented that the use of pure metaphysics has not been more strictly adopted into the researches of physiology, since the just application of these sciences to each other, would tend to the advancement of both.—Nor have the talents and genius of Mr. Lawrence exempted him, in this respect, from the common failure.

For (in his Lecture on the functions of the brain,) he is guilty of a very great oversight in supposing philosophers speak of an *immaterial* being as wanted for *thought*, and *not for sensation*.—Instead of which Mr. Locke, Bishop Butler, David Hartley, Bishop Berkeley, all distinctly argue that matter in motion, not seeming *cause* sufficient for the most *simple sensation*, there-

fore *spirit* is wanted to that end ; which is merely a name for the cause desired : and this mistake shows the little attention he has paid to these authors. But I consider it as impossible that any material improvement should be made in the method of applying philosophy to physiology, as long as men argue, that in every action of the senses, the *body* acts BEFORE *the mind* and UPON it. And *vice versa*, as I have heard it contended in argument “ *that the actions of the memory, the imagination, and the reasoning powers, begin in the mind, exist entirely in the mind, act before the body, and upon it.*” Nor will it advance, as long as any anxiety among materialists makes them *wish* to show *all* is *body*. Or, on the contrary, if whilst religious men are fearful that their dearest hopes may fail them, in case *any* thing of *body* is wanted, in order to *thought*. Whereas religion is not concerned in this matter so much as they imagine. If immortality is man’s inheritance, it is not as a natural birthright. The meanest worm must *feel and think* as well as man, and yet may not be immortal—If it is his ; it is a *gift*, which the Giver has power enough to

make good by ways unseen to us ; but not surely by conveying to man a power *so indiscerptible, indivisible, &c.* that he becomes a rival to his own omnipotence and “ *shall not surely die.*”

SECTION THE EIGHTH.

But to return from this digression which yet was necessary, in order to represent, the whole of Mr. Lawrence's mistaken reasoning on this branch of the subject, I shall only at present further observe, that as the *nature of life* is become a question of great interest, I must reserve a few more observations upon it for another chapter, as Mr. Lawrence has given *various*, and apparently, *inconsistent* definitions of that word. Nor must it be supposed irrelevant to the present subject so to do, for I think his erroneous views in this respect arise also on account of his not supposing that a real efficient cause is necessary to be assigned for *life* any more than for *sensation*. Therefore all philosophers are reckoned absurd, who have hitherto endeavoured, or who still continue, to seek for the proximate cause of it ; it being considered by him

quite sufficient to look upon it as a *circumstance only concurring with organization*,—whereas “there must be a cause for every thing,” *and a cause for that cause*, backwards towards an uncreated Essence.

But every step gained in the knowledge of causes, (i. e. of what objects are necessary in order to the *production* of another) is of exquisite value, and it is pity if a false philosophy should succeed in slackening the emulation of inquiring minds upon this subject, which is one of the highest moment to human health and happiness.

I shall therefore, in order to show that I do not mistake my author, take an opportunity of placing together these definitions, &c. in his own words: but in order to be brief, leave out entirely all foreign matter with which they are interspersed, and which prevent the exact noticing of the contradictions that appear to be among them.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

SECTION THE FIRST.

I RESUME the subject by saying, that it is difficult to controvert Mr. Lawrence's opinion of the nature of life, because his definitions bear no resemblance to each other. They are as follows :

(Lecture 1st, p. 7.) “ That life then, or
 “ the assemblage of all the functions, is
 “ immediately *dependant on organisation*,
 “ appears to me as clear, as that the pre
 “ sence of the sun causes the light of day;
 “ and to suppose that we could have light
 “ without that luminary, would not be
 “ more unreasonable than to conceive that
 “ life is independent of the animal body, in
 “ which the vital phenomena are observed.’

Lecture 2d, p. 61. “ To talk of life as
 “ independent of an animal body, to speak
 “ of a function without reference to an ap-
 “ propriate organ, is physiologically absurd
 “ —it is looking for an effect without a
 “ cause.”

(Lecture 3d, p. 81.) “ The living muscular fibre is irritable. The living nervous fibre is sensible.”—(p. 82.) “ To call life a *property of organization* would be unmeaning, it would be nonsense. The primary or elementary animal structures are endowed with vital properties ; their combinations compose the animal organs, in which by means of the vital properties of the component elementary structures, the animal functions are carried on.”

Lecture 4th, p. 92. “ The body is composed of solids and fluids ;—*the component elements of which nitrogen is a principal one*, united in numbers of 3, 4, or more, easily pass into new combinations ; and are, *for the most part, readily convertible into fluid or gas.*”

(P. 93.) “ Life presupposes organization.”

(Ibid.) Again ; “ Living bodies exhibit a constant internal motion ; whilst this motion lasts, the body is said to be alive

"—when it ceases, the organic structures
 "then yield to the chemical affinities of
 "the surrounding elements."

SECTION THE SECOND.

Now, surely, it is a contradiction to say, life is "*dependant on organization*," as light is upon the sun, and yet that it is "*unmeaning*" and *nonsense*, to call life a *property of it**. It is a second contradiction to say, that life is *dependant as a function*, upon an animated body†; when the body could not be animated without it; or that as "*assembled functions*," it is "*dependant on organization*, as light is dependant on "*the sun*‡." When life is so far from consisting in "*the assembled functions*," that none of the functions can take place without life,—and thus it is wanted as a quality, or *being, first in order to coalesce* and form a junction with the organs in order to their action. Accordingly, although life may never be found without organization, because life requires *its co-operation in order to a certain result*, yet life is not thence *dependant*

* Lect. 3. p. 82.

† Lect. 2. p. 61.

‡ Lect. 1. p. 7.

on it, as an *effect* upon *its cause*, as light is upon the sun, which is never above the horizon without its brilliant attendant.—But many a beautiful and youthful set of organs are *perfect*, without animation.—This error arises entirely from considering that as Cause and Effect are *things that go together*; so *things that go together* are to be considered as in that relation. Whereas vast varieties of objects, have been invariably together in past time, which are not Cause and Effect; and as *past invariableness will not answer for the future*, may not in future be so found. *Joint Causes are always found together; joined qualities also from a common Cause*: and many objects have hitherto always been found together, from an arbitrary position of them, independent of the relation of Cause and Effect, as the letters of the alphabet, &c.

It is a third contradiction to say, that the elementary structures are endowed with vital properties*, and yet to reduce them into the inorganic matters of nitrogen and gas†.

* Lect. 3. p. 82.

† Lect. 4. p. 92.

In my opinion, the only clear and valuable definition is the latter one; viz. "life is a constant internal motion, which enables a body to assimilate new and separate old particles, and prevents it from yielding to the chemical affinities of the surrounding elements." Such a definition as this, comprehends *all the ideas* under the *term*, without begging the question of its cause, or mentioning what it is found with.

It has also the merit of universal *comprehension*, as it comprehends vegetable as well as animal life—and of *exclusion*, not suiting any thing else but itself. It thence leaves free the varieties of the functions, to arise from appropriate organs; and it proves that either *all living* beings must be *sentient*, or else a *further cause* must be sought for *sensation* than *mere life*.

SECTION THE THIRD.

That "life must presuppose organization*," is another proposition of Mr. Lawrence's, which I must also deny;

* Lect. 4. p. 98.

and that because life is absolutely necessary both for its formation and support. Without life in the parents, the organs could not have been formed; and without life they cannot act in their juxta-position, upon the surrounding *elements*, either before or after birth, in order to their growth and support. Yet when life is once *given*, the *use of the organs is absolutely necessary to keep it up*.

Thus combustible matters may be heaped upon each other, yet neither warmth nor light succeed; but let an "*extra cause*" kindle the pile, then the flame may be kept alive for ever, by the constant *addition* of such substances.—In like manner life as we find it, as a perpetual flame, must be kept up and transmitted, whilst the proper objects for its support are administered: but for its original *Cause*, we must go back, until some extraneous power is referred to as its first parent. It is an *Effect*; it begins to be in all we know and have known, yet it is wanted in its own turn as a cause, and as a quality already in being, to mix and unite with the gross

elements of brute matter, for the formation and continuance of all animated nature.

We are told that “*God breathed into man the breath of life,*” and here philosophy supports Scripture, for the organs must originally have been kindled into life by a power, equal to giving them that internal vigour and motion, capable of enabling them to act afterwards for themselves, upon the objects which surrounded them. Then the living lungs could play upon the air, the living stomach be hungry and assimilate its food, the living heart beat, and the living blood circulate through every vein, and become capable of transmitting *the principle* communicated to it, to similar natures, without any assignable termination.

My notion of life therefore agrees in this respect with that of Mr. Lawrence, viz. “That it is a peculiar inward motion of the “organs.”—And I consider it further, as continually propagated through the species, and mixing with the newly evolved forms of arranged matter; *and that it is kept up, as*

long as the organs remain sound, and they are placed in fit circumstances for their respective actions.

But men and animals are all of them *Effects*, and the first of each kind *and its life could not have begun of itself*,—nor yet as *Effects*, could they go back to all eternity, for *they might as well be here in time without causes*, as in eternity; *Effects*, however far removed from the present date, are still *Effects*; are still only *new qualities* from the *junction of previous objects*; which objects (the *Causes*) could not have been the same with the qualities, (the *Effects*).

The first cause of life therefore must be “extraneous” to any of the bodies among which it is found. For at their first creation, and in order to act their *parts* as it were, the organs must not only have been *arranged* but have *lived*, and this life communicated to them at the same time, and probably by the same forming powers, as a joint quality with their arrangement. Thus a clock may be ever so well put together, but the different instruments will not per-

form their *functions*, without an “*extraneous power*” originally to put the pendulum in motion: — then afterwards the pendulum by the *natural physical laws between it and the surrounding objects*, will *continue* to beat; whilst also the motion of the other mechanical instruments forms a *part* of the *whole* power necessary to keep it going, though not wanted *at first* to that end. This would form such a *circle* of Cause and Effect, as would be inexplicable, except upon the principle of the original *former* and *mover* being “*extraneous*” to both.

In like manner, all qualities of existing objects, which now play on each other as mutual Cause and Effect, the lungs, which are necessary to the heart, and the heart to the lungs,—and both to the action of the brain, and the action of the brain to both; —life which is necessary to sensation, and the movement of the whole;—and sensation, and the movement of the whole to life, must all of them (in order to explain such phenomena) have originally had their builder, and mover, not contained in their own powers.

Now the proximate cause for the principle, or motion termed life, *may*, and ought to be inquired into by physiologists.

But that it is only, and *essentially*, the result, and consequence, or property or element, of the being to whose results, qualities and finest elements, it is necessary in order to give them birth ; is a contradiction, inadmissible in the application of abstract demonstration to the objects of life.

SECTION THE FOURTH.

But as long as the notions of Mr. Hume shall prevail, inquiries of this nature will be instituted in vain ; nor indeed is there any received doctrine upon the relation of Cause and Effect, which can be securely used, as an efficient instrument in the advancement of science.

Bishop Berkeley thought a Cause must necessarily be *active*, and so a *spirit* ! And it is universally imagined that a Cause is, in its very essence, *before* its Effects.

There is also, a notion that one object is *sufficient* to an event; when many are perhaps wanted in order to produce it.

I pretend not to have found the whole nature of this relation;—But I shortly recapitulate what I have advanced.

1st.—The junction of two or more qualities or objects is wanted to every new creation of a new quality.

2dly.—That any *one* of the qualities or objects needful in order to the formation of another, may be termed a *Cause*, because *absolutely necessary*, and, when all the other needful circumstances are duly placed with which it is to unite, *efficient* to its production.

But, 3dly. The *whole* number of objects existing, which are necessary to it, may also, under one complex idea, be deemed *the one whole cause necessary*.

4thly.—The *union of these*, is the *proximate Cause* of, and is *one* with the *Effect*.

5thly.—The *objects* therefore are *before* the Effects, but the *union of them* is *in* and *with* the Effects.

This ambiguity, arising from the necessity of naming each object, wanted to an end, and all that are wanted to it, and the junction necessary to it, the *Cause* of it, is a fruitful source of error in every branch of analytical philosophy.

6thly.—When Effects or *new qualities* are once formed, they may re-act as Causes, in order to keep up the original objects, which contributed to their formation.

7thly.—Although the very word Effect implies a *change* in qualities, yet among a set of new qualities formed, *all* of them are not therefore entirely changed.

The spark first elicited from the tinder, is kept separate, as to its appearance, its warmth and light, amidst all the alteration, in which it involves the objects it approaches.

8thly.—*It is not necessary, however, that any of the Effects, should resemble any of the objects, by whose union they are caused;—and in general, an entire mixture, junction and concussion of qualities, involves the whole original objects in ruins, whilst it strikes out a vast many new and altered ones, creating other masses, other complex objects, totally unlike those whose union was their Cause. On the other hand, it sometimes appears that nature intends to render one individual essence, the prime object intended to be preserved; and therefore in its mixture with others, ordains that they shall only administer to it, by contributing to the perpetual nourishment, support, and increase of its qualities; as in the growth of plants and animals; or the vigour, improvement, character, individuality, &c. of the sentient principle.—*

SECTION THE FIFTH.

But to conclude;—Mr. Lawrence's error lies, 1st, in the adoption and application of the principle, that invariability of concurrence, is of the sameness as the rela-

tion of Cause and Effect, object and property; which is the result of an argument in a circle, and which cannot be too severely deprecated, however authorized, by the illogical definitions of Mr. Hume and Dr. Brown.

And, 2dly. In concluding that because *one or more Causes* known to be necessary to an end, are discovered, therefore *all* are discovered, which is to draw general conclusions from particular premises. Did an ignorant person, unacquainted with the method of forming a mirror, consider it as no more than polished glass;—did he only observe that it reflected images when polished, and that injuring the polish prevented their reflection, he might form a proposition very similar to that of Mr. Lawrence, and say; *polished glass reflects the images when presented to it*; polish, and glass, and reflection, always go together; and as this is the case, we need not seek for any “*extrinsic aid*,” to the production of reflected images from its surface. But we know that *extrinsic aid is wanted to the whole Effect*. And indeed before a reflected

image from a mirror can be attained, let the mind pause, and wonder at the great variety of objects necessary to cause it. Can we much better enumerate those that may be requisite, to the formation of the most simple modes of sensation? Do we know the qualities of matter, when we use the term? Do we know the reason of all its varieties when we name them by some feeble impressions they make on our organs? As unperceived by the senses, have we the least idea of what is in matter in general, or in the *nerve* in particular, or in the formation of animals, or in the nature of life, that we should suppose nothing more is made use of for so extraordinary a difference, as that between sentient and insentient beings, than *arrangement*, (i. e. organization,) and *motion*, (or whatever other mode of being is termed life?) Certain it is, there is no experiment can be made on animated nature, which shall prove what are *all*, and *only* those objects, which may be necessary to SENSATION; or whether the sentient principle *be like*, or altogether unlike the *Effect*, SENSATION; and indeed in any experiment which de-

stroyed the life and the nerve, if this principle should continue to exist, our senses could not descry it.

SECTION THE SIXTH.

What probable arguments may be advanced upon the matter, is foreign to the object of this Essay, and I shall not now enter upon them; but conclude by expressing my astonishment, that Mr. Hume's and Dr. Brown's definition of the relation of Cause and Effect, should have continued so long, admired, adopted, and unanswered.

The necessary connexion of Cause and Effect, and our knowledge of it, in opposition to mere *fancy or custom*, is the governing proposition in every science. In vain should we look for improvement in any, *could we run the risk of so vital a mistake*, as to suppose that objects, however frequently conjoined, were *therefore necessarily connected*, or, on the contrary, that in the necessary production of qualities, there was no more than an experienced conjunction of them, and that they might change

their places by a “ change in the course of nature.”

I have endeavoured to show, that any one junction of bodies in fit circumstances for what is termed the experimentum crucis, may be sufficient to establish where the power lies towards the production of certain qualities,—that ordinary life affords such experiment to the mind ; and that without it, constant conjunctions of antecedent and subsequent objects, will not prove where the Cause of the Effect is. Conjunctions, however frequent, may be separable both in fact and fancy ; Cause and Effect, a changed object with its changed qualities, are inseparable in both.

Let then the following just propositions be again received—

That objects cannot begin their own existences.

That like objects, must ever have like qualities.

That like Causes, must generate like Effects.

And that objects, of which we have had no experience, must resemble those of which we have had experience, for that the course of Nature continues uniformly the same.

These are the only true foundations of scientific research, of practical knowledge, and of belief in a creating and presiding Deity.

THE END.

ERRATA.

Page 12 line 16 for "a," read "or."
37 — 32 ~~dele~~ "by."
51 — 25 — "of."
52 — 1 — " "
57 — 7 for "exists," read "exist."
74 — 13 ~~dele~~ "with."
77 — 22 — "else."
90 — 22 for "show," read "showing."
104 — 2 — "excited," read "elicited."





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